

## Israel proposes Palestinian currency model

TEL AVIV (AFP) — Israeli Finance Minister Avraham Shohat has put forward the model of the Scottish pound for a symbolic Palestinian currency in the occupied territories during the five-year interim period of autonomy. "We don't think the currency must be the shekel or the dollar," Shohat said. "We think it should be a currency with the same value as the pound sterling, but the Bank of England is the controlling authority. Mr. Shohat leads the Israeli delegation in talks with the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) in Paris on economic aspects of the implementation of the Sept. 19 autonomy deal. Israeli sources in Paris have predicted an economic agreement as early as next week while talks on security issues have hit the rocks and are only due to resume Monday after lengthy bickering. "The atmosphere is good," Mr. Shohat said of the Paris sessions.

# Jordan Times

An independent Arab political daily published by the Jordan Press Foundation  
جورديان تايمز يومية سياسية مستقلة عن المؤسسة الصحفية الأردنية والرأي

Volume 18 Number 5506

AMMAN SATURDAY, JANUARY 8, 1994, RAGAB 26, 1414

Price: Jordan 150 Fils

## Jordan and PLO sign economic agreement

### 3 days of talks produce framework for Jordanian-Palestinian ties

By Wafa Amr  
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — After three days of arduous deliberations, Jordan and the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) Friday signed an economic cooperation agreement setting forth relations between the Kingdom and the "liberated Palestinian territories" during a five-year interim period.

The economic agreement, a compromise between basic Jordanian and Palestinian positions, comprises a broad framework for cooperation in the fields of banking and money, trade, labour force, investment, tourism, customs and tariffs as well as security and border issues and regulations.

This agreement has been the culmination of strenuous and long efforts that we both engaged seriously in," Dr. Farouk Kaddoumi, Minister of State for Cabinet Affairs and Minister of Information, said. "I can say it is a very good agreement, which is the start of a new phase of continued and practical cooperation and coordination."

Dr. Anani, addressing a press conference, focused on the practicality of the accord and the difficult task it took both sides to actually arrive at

signing it after a long delay. The original pact was jointly drafted last September. It was amended in October. But PLO Chairman Yasser Arafat's justification for delaying ratification of the draft agreement was that he could not commit himself to any agreements before he was assured of Israeli withdrawal from Gaza and Jericho and before the Palestinian authority was established in the "liberated Palestinian territories."

The takeoff point for the week's negotiations which led to the economic accord was the PLO's agreement to put off the issue of confederation until Palestinians living in the occupied territories regain their right to self-determination and free choice.

Last week, His Majesty King Hussein called on the PLO to drop the word "confederation" and put it off until Palestinians could choose their relationship freely without any imposition from the leaderships.

Mr. Nashashibi said the PLO agreed that confederation "would be determined by the free will of our two peoples at the right time and that the economic agreement was a major phase leading to that constitutional relation."

Dr. Anani explained that Palestinians and Jordanians

should concentrate on coordination now and on developing relations because both have more pressing issues to deal.

"Thank God, we have set the basic foundation on the right path leading to practical and serious coordination which can be translated into practical steps that will positively affect the national interest of the Palestinian people, the Jordanian people and joint interests of both peoples," Dr. Anani said in the joint press conference held with Muhammad Zuhdi Al Nashashibi, chief of the PLO's Economic Department, following the signing ceremony.

Dr. Saeed Al Tal, deputy prime minister, minister of higher education and head of the Jordanian delegation to the economic talks with the PLO, signed the economic agreement with the head of the Palestinian delegation, Farouk Kaddoumi, at the Foreign Ministry Friday noon. Arguments on the wording continued until the last minutes before signing.

"It took both sides a lot of effort and long hours before reaching this agreement which reflects no contradictory wishes but unified aspirations that reflect the linkage and unified interests of people East and West of the River Jordan."



Deputy Prime Minister Saeed Al Tal (right) Friday shakes hands with Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) Political Department Chief Farouk Kaddoumi after three days of talks at the Foreign Ministry (photo by Youssef Al 'Allan)

Dr. Anani said the accord meets the aspirations of both peoples and their expected challenges. It also takes into consideration factors of implementability and execution on the ground, he said.

The time spent on deliberations during the past three days has given both sides ample time to discuss issues in detail "which created joint understanding for the nature of developments and to enable us to

include ideas that could be implemented rather than words that cannot be translated into action," he said.

Dr. Anani said it was of utmost importance for both sides to reach this economic agreement at this period of time because of "tremendous pressures exerted on Jordan, and many attempts that aim at driving a wedge and ending the Palestinian-Jordanian relationship, which would lead us, God forbid, to different and separate ways which would not help either of us to reach our objectives."

King Hussein had issued a "last chance" warning to the PLO to coordinate with Jordan before it was too late to save the comprehensiveness of the Middle East peace negotiations or attempts to isolate the PLO from the rest of the Arabs.

Dr. Anani said the agreement reached between the two sides "comforts many people in Jordan and in Palestine who were anxiously awaiting such a step to allay their concerns over current and future relations between Jordan and the Palestinians."

Dr. Anani and Mr. Nashashibi said the economic accord differs little from the previous draft reached last October.

### Both sides voice satisfaction and pledge closer coordination

Observers said Jordan obviously compromised on the issue of banking in return for the PLO's signature. PLO officials said minor amendments were made to the original draft which appeased the PLO's desire for recognition. The PLO's main objection to the Jordanian-Israeli memorandum of understanding concerning the reopening of Jordanian bank branches in the West Bank was that the banking agreement neglected the Palestinian authority in the occupied territories and bypassed the PLO as the political authority there, according to PLO officials. This economic pact, they said, recognised the Palestinian authority in the territories and it became a partner to the Central Bank of Jordan (CBJ) in reopening bank branches in the West Bank.

"We have insisted on changing some articles in the original draft. We ended up with minor changes and slight modification in the wording," said one PLO official. He said some of the original draft's articles were removed completely since they were not considered priorities that have to be dealt with during the interim period. Dr. Anani said that banking

(Continued on page 5)

## Britain not seeking to destabilise Libya

VALETTA (AFP) — Britain is only trying to ensure the fair trial of the Lockerbie bombers and is not seeking to remove the Libyan government, British Foreign Secretary Douglas Hurd said here Friday. "We are not involved in seeking to destabilise or change the government of Libya," Mr. Hurd told journalists after meeting with Maltese leaders. "We believe there should be a fair trial." Mr. Hurd currently on his way back to London after a visit to the Middle East (see page 3). "We also warned that the Middle East must avoid a 'sterile period' in the peace process because 'time is not on the side of peace.' He added the unrest in the Gaza Strip was not going to last forever and that negotiators must persist in their talks."

## Top Libyan official visits Tunisia

TUNIS (R) — Major Khodidi Hamdi, member of Libya's five-man leadership headed by Muammar Qadhafi, is in Tunisia for talks, the Libyan embassy said Friday. Tunisia and Libya are members of the Arab Maghrib Union (AMU), along with Algeria, Morocco and Mauritania. An AMU summit under Tunisia's presidency, planned for the end of 1993, was postponed partly because of Libya's dispute with the West over the 1988 bombing of a U.S. jet over Lockerbie, Scotland. Tunisia is trying to stage the summit around the end of this month.

## Kurdish dissident shot dead in Turkey

ANKARA (R) — An Iranian Kurdish dissident has been shot dead in Turkey where he was registered by the United Nations as a refugee, police said on Friday. Taha Kirmench was killed with a shot from a pistol on Tuesday, a security official in the central Anatolian city of Corus said. Police said several people, including Iranian nationals, had been detained in connection with the killing. The Turkish Daily News said Kirmench had been a leader of a faction of the Kurdistan Democratic Party of Iran (KDPI). Two other members of the faction were killed in Turkey last year.

## Israel frees 101 Palestinians in 'goodwill' gesture for peace

OCCUPIED JERUSALEM (Agencies) — Israel released 101 Palestinian prisoners on Friday in a goodwill gesture on the eve of the resumption of autonomy negotiations with the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO), the army announced.

Police Minister Moshe Shahal described the move as symbolic, claiming all those freed had only a few days left to serve and supported the peace process.

But Palestinian sources said of the 47 Gazans who were let out, four had between six and 19 months of their sentences remaining, 18 had from one to six months and 25 just a few days.

No breakdown was immediately available for 54 prisoners from the West Bank, but their Gaza colleagues said some also had many months left to serve.

After a week of bickering, the PLO and Israel agreed Thursday to resume talks in the Egyptian Red Sea resort on

Sunday or Monday to try to implement autonomy in the Gaza Strip and West Bank town of Jericho.

Mr. Shahal said no decision had been taken on further releases among the 11,000 Palestinians in Israeli jails. "Everything will depend on the discussions which will cover this area," Mr. Shahal told Israel Radio.

Lists have been drawn up detailing age, health and sentence and prisoners would be released accordingly when the government gave the green light, Mr. Shahal added.

The army said that those released Friday belonged to the PLO's mainstream Fatah organisation led by Yasser Arafat. It said that only those "without blood on their hands" were being let go.

All had been convicted in military courts before the Sept. 13 signing of the Israel-PLO autonomy accord.

No members of the Islamic Resistance Movement (Hamas) and Islamic Jihad

were among those released, nor were followers of leftist groups within the PLO that are fighting the autonomy plan.

Freedom for Palestinians held in Israeli prisons has been a key demand of the PLO from the start of negotiations.

The army said before Friday's release 4,958 Palestinians are held in military prisons and another 3,200 are held in other jails. The Mandela Institute, a human rights group based in the West Bank town of Ramallah, estimates, however, that Israel holds 11,700 Palestinians.

The prisoner issue is only one of a myriad of problems worrying negotiators trying to bridge gaps in the Gaza-Jericho plan.

Under the agreement, an Israeli troop withdrawal from Gaza and Jericho was to begin on Dec. 13 but it has already been delayed.

The main issues dividing the sides are the size of Jericho, control of border crossings, and security arrangements.



Mimir Abdul Ghani (left), a Palestinian prisoner released Friday, is embraced by his brother in the Gaza Strip (AFP photo)

## Moi says Sudan talks going well

NAIROBI (AFP) — Kenyan President Daniel Arap Moi said Friday that preliminary Sudanese peace talks held here had gone well following meetings among Khartoum government negotiators, rebel leaders and four African foreign ministers.

The talks were hosted by Mr. Moi as chairman of a six-member regional group, the Inter-Governmental Authority on Drought and Development (IGADD).

This week the foreign ministers of Kenya, Ethiopia, Eritrea and Uganda, the four IGADD members chosen by the organisation to broker peace in Sudan, met the leaders of two rival factions of the rebel Sudan People's Liberation Army (SPLA), John Garang and Riek Machar.

They also met a Khartoum government delegation led by Abdullah Deng, Mr. Moi said, in a statement reported by the Kenya News Agency.

The brief statement gave no details about the outcome of the meetings, intended to form a basis for subsequent talks.

Mr. Moi said he was "personally pleased with the outcome of the meeting" and was "especially happy that the Khartoum government was represented."

## PLO urges dissident factions to end rift

TUNIS (Agencies) — Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) leadership on Friday urged all Palestinian factions to bury the hatchet and start a broad dialogue ahead of autonomy in the Israeli-occupied territories.

The PLO Executive Committee said factions in the occupied territories and abroad should rally around a "common denominator" as their "first national authority in modern history" was becoming a reality.

In a statement published by the Palestinian news agency Wafa, it said they could work to recover completely their "inalienable rights of return, self-determination and an independent state with Jerusalem as its capital."

"Join hands to build our national entity... and let love guide our behaviour and our relations," the Executive Committee statement said.

But 10 hardline Palestinian groups, including several PLO factions, on Wednesday announced a united leadership in Damascus to defeat the September autonomy accord and also agreed to boycott elections after self-rule begins.

The Executive Committee, meeting since Sunday under

the chairmanship of Yasser Arafat, also hailed an initiative by a delegation of leading Palestinians who had asked for democracy in the PLO and a Palestinian dialogue.

The PLO executive body confirmed its "attachment to the principle of democratic dialogue, political pluralism, freedom of thought and the practice of democracy."

The pro-democracy lobby, headed by Haider Abdul Shafi, said Thursday it had failed to curb Mr. Arafat's "monopoly" on decision-making in the peace negotiations with Israel, blaming Executive Committee members for showing no interest in making joint decisions.

Dr. Abdul Shafi, one of the founders of the PLO and the former head of the Palestinian delegation to bilateral talks with Israel in Washington, was given full authority by the Executive Committee to organise a broad dialogue.

The announcement Thursday came as Israel and the PLO agreed to resume autonomy talks, aimed at launching Palestinian self-rule in the Gaza Strip and the West Bank town of Jericho, in the Egyptian Red Sea resort of Tabá.

## France gets tough with NATO over Yugoslavia

PARIS (Agencies) — France spearheaded a drive on Friday to get next week's North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO) summit to agree on tough new measures to halt the Bosnian war as the Western players involved in peacekeeping efforts wondered how much longer they can continue.

The 16 NATO nations must be prepared "to help the U.N. implement its resolutions by sending in further troops and ensuring full protection in the safe areas," Foreign Minister Alain Juppe said in a radio interview.

The question of former Yugoslavia was originally not on the agenda of the summit next Monday and Tuesday, but was added at French insistence.

"We must get NATO and the United States to recognise the validity of the European position on former Yugoslavia," a senior French official said Friday amid fears the summit would skate over the issue.

In other developments on Friday, German Foreign Minister Klaus Kinkel said Friday he saw a slim chance for weekend peace talks between the Croatian and Muslim-led Bosnian governments to succeed but cautioned against raising hopes too high.

Mr. Kinkel said he had formed his impression after talks in Bonn on Thursday with international mediators Lord Owen of Britain and Norway's Thorvald Stoltenberg.

Mr. Kinkel will host a Bonn summit starting on Saturday between Croatian President Franjo Tudjman, Bosnian President Alija Izetbegovic and the mediators, who represent the European Union and the United Nations respectively.

In Ovcar, Croatia the U.S. ambassador to the United Nations Madeline Albright, shaken by a visit to a mass grave for as many as 300 people believed executed by Serbs, said that the world must know the "dreadful story."





## Mitterrand sees civil war in Algeria

PARIS (Agencies) — French President Francois Mitterrand said Thursday that Algeria was at the start of a civil war and there were good grounds to fear the spread of Muslim fundamentalism.

Answering questions at a New Year reception for the press, Mr. Mitterrand said France should support those in North Africa who wanted to make their countries into modern, tolerant states.

As for the present situation in Algeria, it can be described as the beginnings of a civil war.

A foreign state should remain very cautious, nevertheless, we have the right to be worried about the campaign in favour of fundamentalism, he said, adding that true Islam was a tolerant and generous religion.

Mr. Mitterrand said France owed a historical debt to the Algerian people and would maintain its aid despite the unrest in its former territory, which won independence in 1962 after a bitter war.

French officials said Algeria appeared to be sliding into a spiral of violence in which neither the outlawed fundamentalist Islamic Salvation Front (FIS) nor the army-backed government had the means to control the country completely.

At least 1,800 people have been killed in two years of violence, since the authorities cancelled a general election in which the FIS had won, a commanding lead.

French officials said the real casualty figures, the number of attacks by armed groups and the scale of reprisals by security forces were all larger than the Algerian government and media had reported.

Foreign Minister Alain Juppe said earlier this week that the situation in Algeria was "a source of almost daily anguish" to the French authorities.

France has advised its nationals to evacuate their families from Algeria following the murder of three Frenchmen and the kidnapping of a fourth.

Algerian forces shot dead six armed men in the western city of Oran and recovered guns including one stolen from a murdered gendarme, the official news agency APS said Wednesday.

Five of the activists were killed on Tuesday in the working-class area of Ras Al Ain on the outskirts of Oran, some 35 kilometres from Algiers.

Security sources quoted by APS said four shotguns, an automatic pistol and a stolen Kalashnikov were recovered. The sixth militant, Nadjia Kadacha, a 23-year-old from Algiers, was killed on Sunday by security forces in Oran.

## Ghali to press Aziz on \$1.6 b oil sales

UNITED NATIONS (Agencies) — Secretary-General Boutros Ghali hopes to persuade Iraq to open talks on a \$1.6 billion oil sale, although Iraq halted discussions because it sought total lifting of the oil embargo, a senior U.N. official said.

The official, who is close to Dr. Ghali and spoke on condition of anonymity, said the U.N. chief will discuss the issue with Iraqi Deputy Prime Minister Tariq Aziz later this month in New York. The Security Council will hold its regular review this month of sanctions against Iraq and is expected to retain them.

The official said that agreeing to a limited oil sale in order to finance purchases of humanitarian aid would not jeopardise Iraq's chances of getting the U.N. oil embargo lifted but would create a new political atmosphere that could help Iraq. He said Iraq and the United Nations had been close to agreement last summer on the limited oil sale.

Iraq broke off talks on the limited sale because it considered the strict U.N. supervision to be burdensome and believed it had a chance of getting the oil embargo lifted. Iraqi diplomats appeared to believe that agreeing to a small oil sale would undermine the possibility of totally ending the embargo.

The Security Council has given no indication of easing sanctions or lifting the oil embargo, which is tied to Iraq's fulfilment of ceasefire conditions for weapons monitoring. Iraq recently accepted long-term monitoring and has made progress in recently accepted long-term monitoring and has made progress in recently accepted long-term monitoring.

The council imposed a total trade embargo against Iraq after it invaded Kuwait but made exceptions for food, medicine and humanitarian supplies. The ceasefire maintains that trade embargo, but says that the oil embargo will be lifted when Iraq makes satisfactory declarations of its prohibited weapons, agrees to destruction and long-term monitoring of military industries.

On Wednesday, the United States, Britain, France and Russia, protested to Iraqi Ambassador Nizar Hamdoun that the Baghdad government is engaged in widespread human rights abuses and demanded a halt.

Iraq would get only about one-third of the proceeds of the \$1.6 billion sale, which was authorised by the Security Council on humanitarian grounds. The rest would be placed in a fund to compensate victims of the invasion of Kuwait and to pay U.N. costs for weapons monitoring in Iraq.

### 'Ceremony refused'

U.S. Gulf war commanders asked Iraqi officers to sign a ceasefire agreement on a U.S. warship in the Gulf, but Iraq refused and insisted on a desert border site, President Saddam Hussein said.

The Iraqi leader told officers in Baghdad in a speech Thursday carried by the official Iraqi News Agency, monitored in Cyprus, that allowing the warship ceremony would be a "historical mistake."

"Imagine them showing a film in which your military comrades are shown going to the American ship to negotiate with the Americans," the Iraqi president said.

President Saddam apparently felt such a ceremony would

smack of the World War II surrender agreement signed by Japanese commanders aboard the battleship USS Missouri in Tokyo Bay on Sept. 2, 1945.

The same, refurbished Missouri was among ships in the multinational armada that formed part of the anti-Iraq coalition. President Saddam did not identify the vessel involved, describing it only as "An American ship."

No immediate reaction to the account came from participants in the allied coalition that drove Iraq out of Kuwait.

Lo the ceasefire ceremony, Lieutenant-General Sultan Hashem Ahmad, Iraq's chief of operations, and Lt. Gen. Salah Abhood Mahmoud, commander of Iraq's Third Army corps, met with U.S. Gen. H. Norman Schwarzkopf and Saudi Lt. Gen. Khaled Ben Sultan in a tent at the border town of Safwan on March 3, 1991.

The Iraqi officers agreed to meet the conditions for a permanent ceasefire in the Gulf war.

The coalition's Gulf war campaign followed Iraq's invasion of Kuwait. After a bombing campaign, a ground offensive drove Iraqi troops from Kuwait. President George Bush declared an initial ceasefire Feb. 28.

It is still completely unclear how many Iraqis died in the conflict. Early estimates that up to 100,000 Iraqi troops and thousands of civilians were killed now are believed exaggerated.

In a March 1993 study, John Heidenrich, formerly an analyst with the Defense Intelligence Agency, said military fatalities may have been as low as 1,500 Iraqis, with about 3,000 wounded.

From 2,000 to 5,000 Kuwaitis died during the seven-month Iraqi occupation of the emirate. One hundred twenty-five Western soldiers, including 148 Americans, and 39 Arabs from the anti-Iraq coalition were killed in the war.

Iraqi President Saddam Hussein on Wednesday renewed his call for an end to the economic sanctions and accused fellow Arabs of delaying the lifting of the embargo. The Iraqi News Agency reported.

"They pay bribes here and there to stop the escalating movement towards lifting the unjust siege on the people of Iraq," he said.

He did not specify which countries he was accusing, but he was clearly referring to the oil-rich Gulf states.

"The Americans always make mistakes. They went wrong in their 30-state aggression (the 1991 Gulf war). They went wrong in Somalia. They will keep on making mistakes," President Saddam said in remarks published in Friday's Baghdad newspapers.

"If someone is evil and arrogant, he will inevitably fall on his head," President Saddam said in his toughest attack on U.S. in months.

His remarks were made when his Gulf war commanders and other top generals visited him to commemorate the founding of the Iraqi armed forces.

He told them not to be misled by foreign propaganda and believe they lost the war over Kuwait. "The Iraqi army is the victor," he said.

General Ayad Feiyh Al Rawi, the army chief-of-staff, said in a newspaper interview this week the armed forces now ranked as the fourth largest in the world after the U.S., China and Russia.



"MIRACLE SITE": U.N. peacekeeping soldiers from Norway and Sweden examine figures cut into the rock in the southern Lebanese village of Qana, mentioned by St. John in the New Testament as the site where Jesus Christ turned water into wine in his first miracle (AFP photo)

## Egypt plans tourism campaign

CAIRO (R) — Egypt is planning to launch a tourism promotion campaign to pull in foreigners scared off by a wave of attacks by militants, the tourism minister said.

The ministry plans to spend about \$25 million on the campaign in 1994, much of it on television and magazine advertisements targeting big-spending tourists from Europe and the United States, Minister Mahmoud Al Beltagi told Reuters.

In 1993 the ministry spent \$3.1 million on promoting tourism, a fraction of the amount spent by its main competitors in the East Mediterranean.

"We would love to promote the country because we have good assets for tourism and we have low occupancy so promotion to tourism to increase demand is important...I have figured out \$25 million," Mr. Beltagi said in an interview late on Thursday.

"We have not paid attention for several decades to promotion. We only stressed the supply side. We are working on the expansion of our promotion budget and we would like to address the specialised

media and mass media," he added.

Militant gunmen and bombers have killed three tourists in the past 15 months — a Briton, a Turk and a Swede.

In the first 10 months of 1993, Egypt's receipts from tourism fell by \$900 million or 42 per cent, compared with the same period of 1993, Mr. Beltagi said.

The number of visitors fell 22 per cent over the same period but they tended to stay less time and spend less money than in the past, the ministry said. About three million people visited Egypt in 1992.

The militant Al Gamaa Al Islamiya, fighting to turn Egypt into Islamic state, claimed responsibility for most of the attacks on tourists. The latest was a bomb and gun attack in December. Eight Austrians on a bus were wounded.

Al Gamaa has repeatedly warned tourists to avoid Egypt so they are not caught in the confrontation between them and the government. Militants say foreign tourists act immorally and violate Islamic traditions by drinking alcohol. Mr. Beltagi said the effect on tourism was out of proportion to the seriousness of the attacks.

"Three have been killed...this is certainly very sad. However, if it is to be taken on statistical criteria, then we will have less than one in a million compared to the 3.2 million tourists who visit our country (a year)," Mr. Beltagi said.

"The traffic was not that much affected in terms of statistics. We have 21.9 less in the entries but the income decreased because Egypt is becoming very cheap as destination, hotels and villages are competing in lower prices," he added.

"We're not good in commercialising, marketing and promoting. We have the same mental values of an agricultural civilisation. Other destinations have less tourist attractions but they are stronger in promotion and in dealing with the trade and the media, so they attract much more with less assets," he said.

Hoteliers said the occupancy rate at their five-star hotels was between 30 to 40 per cent below last year's. Many have slashed prices to encourage package tours.

## U.N. chief to recommend halving troops in Somalia

UNITED NATIONS (Agencies) — U.N. Secretary-General Boutros Ghali will recommend a scaled-down Somalia peacekeeping mission, involving only about half the troops now deployed in the country, a U.N. official said Thursday.

The official, speaking on condition of anonymity, said the reduced U.N. operation would involve only about 15,000 troops, and these would be deployed largely outside troubled south Mogadishu, the stronghold of factional leader Mohammed Farrah Aideed.

The official said the U.N. chief in the next few days would present three options to the Security Council for reconfiguring the Somalia operation after the withdrawal of U.S., French, Belgian and German troops this year.

The size and nature of the future Somalia mission will be decided by the Security Council. The current mandate expires March 31.

U.N. officials reportedly favour a decentralised approach that does not depend on Mogadishu and makes greater use of the port of Kismayo and Baidoa airport.

More than 95 per cent of Somalia is relatively stable, with the exception being south

Mogadishu. A newly built road would make it possible for aid deliveries to bypass the southern part of the capital and reach the rest of the country.

The U.N. mission currently has fewer than 30,000 troops. U.N. officials have been scrambling to replace the Americans, who will be gone by March 31, and the Europeans.

The official, speaking at a briefing for reporters on Somalia, said the United Nations still does not have commitments for more troops, except from Pakistan and India. Most nations are waiting to see if the Somali factions are able to reach a political agreement and if the world body is able to pay countries for contributing troops.

The 15,000 troops would be sufficient to carry out the present mandate to deliver humanitarian aid, protect aid workers, promote political reconciliation and aid in reconstruction, the return of refugees, rebuilding roads, training police and setting up a judicial system, the official said.

The U.N. peacekeeping force in Somalia backed away from aggressive military actions and forcible disarmament of Somali militias after an Oct. 3 clash in Mogadishu in which

18 Americans, a Malaysian peacekeeper and about 300 Somalis were killed.

U.S. troops arrived in December 1992 to help Somalia recover from the famine and anarchy which claimed 350,000 lives that year. It turned the operation over to the United Nations in May, but it quickly soured. Critics say the United Nations focused too heavily on trying to capture Gen. Aideed.

### Malaysian to head forces

Malaysian army general Abu Samah Abu Bakar has been appointed military commander of the United Nations Peacekeeping Operations in Somalia (UNOSOM II), defence officials said in Kuala Lumpur Friday.

Gen. Abu Samah will receive his letter of appointment from U.N. headquarters in New York on Jan. 20, a Defence Ministry spokesman said.

The Malaysian general will replace Lieutenant-General Cevik Bir of Turkey, whose term of service ends on January 12.

It is the first time a Malaysian has headed the military command of a U.N. peacekeeping force, senior officials noted.

## NEWS IN BRIEF

### Israel to spend millions to protect 120 settlers

TEL AVIV (AFP) — The Israeli army faces a multi-million dollar bill to protect an isolated, tiny Jewish settlement in the middle of the Gaza Strip during the five-year interim period of Palestinian autonomy. On top of \$5 million a year to maintain the Netzarim settlement where 120 Israelis live between Gaza City and Khan Yunis, the army will have to pay for 70 reserve soldiers a day or 30,000 days a year, according to Friday's Yedioth Aharanot newspaper. And the army will also have to build a road linking Netzarim, set up in 1972, with Israel itself, some eight kilometres away. The newspaper's report "Netzarim: the army's bad headache" was based on a military planning document sent to Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin who has pledged not to dismantle any settlements during autonomy. A delegation from his Labour Party called for the 30 families at Netzarim to be moved over some 4,000 Israelis have settled in Gaza but mainly in two blocks which are easier to protect.

### Sharon doesn't rule out bid for premiership

TEL AVIV (AP) — Ariel Sharon, the former general and mastermind of the 1982 Lebanon war, has said Wednesday he would consider challenging Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin in the next national elections. "I believe I am capable of providing answers, solutions to the main problems we face," Mr. Sharon 65, a leader of the right-wing Likud Party, said on Israel Television. An outspoken critic of the Sept. 13 accord which he feels yields too much ground to the Palestinians, Mr. Sharon said he does "not negate" the possibility of running. "If the situation will require it, I will do it," Mr. Sharon would be the third hawkish candidate to run against Mr. Rabin in the 1996 polls. The others are Likud Chairman Benjamin Netanyahu and Rafael Eytan, a hawkish lawmaker and former army chief of staff. By a law passed a year ago Israelis will elect their prime minister directly in the next elections scheduled for 1996, rather than choosing party slates as in the past. Mr. Sharon served as housing minister in the last Likud government ousted when Mr. Rabin's Labour Party won the 1992 elections.

### Groups seek exposure of Iran-contra papers

WASHINGTON (AP) — Secret court filings by major figures in the Iran-contra scandal should be released immediately, said several private groups concerned that the prosecutor's final report on the affair is about to be suppressed. Sources close to the Iran-contra investigation told the Associated Press on Thursday that secret papers — seeking to delete substantial portions of the report — were filed last month in federal appeals court by attorneys for former President Ronald Reagan, former Attorney General Edwin Meese and former White House aide Oliver North. The action followed a Dec. 3 announcement by a special federal appeals court panel that it would soon release the report of Iran-contra panel prosecutor Lawrence Walsh, said the sources. The Washington Post first reported the filings in a story last month. "Apparently, only hours after the court issued its order," several individuals named in the final report, filed sealed motions, requesting reconsideration and leave to appeal the order to the United States supreme court, said court papers filed by the Society of Professional Journalists, the National Security Archive and the Reporters' Committee for Freedom of the Press.

### Sultan Qaboos reshuffles Omani cabinet

MUSCAT (R) — Sultan Qaboos Ben Said of Oman ordered a minor cabinet reshuffle Wednesday, introducing three new portfolios. Deputy Prime Minister for legal affairs Fahd Ben Mahmoud Al Said has been appointed deputy prime minister for cabinet affairs. The Sultan, who is Oman's de facto prime minister, is also head of state and minister of defence, foreign affairs, and finance. He decreed the formation of a ministry for higher education to be led by spring Education Minister Yabba Ben Mahmoud Al-Montheri, who is being replaced by Said Ben Ibrahim Ben Said Al-Bousaidi. A ministry of legal affairs and a ministry of state for development affairs have also been introduced and will be led by Mohammed Ben Ali Nasser Al Alawi and Mohammed Ben Mousa Al Yousef respectively.

### Iranian agency denies Ayatollah arrested

NICOSIA (R) — The Iranian news agency IRNA has denied a report that Ayatollah Mohammad Rohani, a senior Shiite Muslim cleric, had been arrested. It quoted his son Mohammad Ali Rohani as saying the Ayatollah gave his last lectures at a theological school in the holy city of Qom south on Tehran Wednesday. A Reuters report on Tuesday quoted a dissident Iranian cleric in Germany as saying Ayatollah Rohani, who believed that religion should be separate from politics, was arrested at his home by security agents on Saturday night and taken to an unknown place. The cleric, Mehdi Haeri, said Ayatollah Rohani, 70, was detained after he refused a demand by security agents and officials of a special court not to seek the position of marja taqlid (source of emulation), the top religious authority of Shiite Muslims.

### Palestinian, Israeli police cooperate

TEL AVIV (AP) — It was a small step for Middle East peace, perhaps, but one that at least made a bit of the region safer. Israeli and Palestinian police recovered \$336,000 Thursday from a bank robbery, in their first joint operation since the autonomy accord was signed in September. A gang of Palestinian thieves with a stolen water cannon made off with the money while it was transferred between banks in the occupied West Bank 10 days ago. On Thursday, a Palestinian official and the West Bank military governor jointly supervised the digging of a two-metre deep hole where the cash was buried. Twenty newly-trained Palestinian officers worked with Israeli police to solve the case. Four suspects were identified by Palestinian police, who turned them over to Israeli authorities. "We do not have prisons to arrest the thieves, so we turned them to the hands of the Israeli police," said Dr. Thabet Thabet, a Palestinian official in the West Bank town of Tulkarm.

JORDAN TELEVISION	
Tel. 773111-19	
<b>PROGRAMME TWO</b>	
17:30	Les Aventuriers De L'Espace
17:41	L'Ecole Des Fars
18:30	Besamaboir
19:00	News in French
19:15	Uthusa
19:30	News in Hebrew
20:00	News in Arabic
20:30	The Family Boys
21:00	Talk Show
21:30	The Campbell
22:00	News in English
22:15	Feature Film: "Deep Trouble"
<b>PRAYER TIMES</b>	
06:10	Fajr
06:23	[Sunrise] Duha
11:42	Dhuhr
14:28	Asr
16:51	Maghreb
18:15	Isha
<b>CHURCHES</b>	
St. Mary of Nazareth Church Swarth, Tel. 510740	
Memorials of God Church, Tel. 637440	
St. Joseph Church Tel. 634590	
Church of the Annunciation Tel. 637440	
St. Saba Church Tel. 661757	
Terra Sancta Church Tel. 622366	
Church of the Annunciation Tel. 623541	
Anglican Church Tel. 630851, Tel. 628543	
Armenian Catholic Church Tel. 711331	
Armenian Orthodox Church Tel. 715261	
St. Ephraim Church Tel. 717151	
Armenian International Church Tel. 625256	
Evangelical Lutheran Church Tel. 624328	
German-speaking Evangelical Congregation Tel. 661915	
The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints Tel. 623824, 654932	
Church of Nazareth Tel. 675691	
<b>WEATHER</b>	
Bulletin supplied by the Department of Meteorology.	
It will be sunny with a slight rise of temperatures. Clouds will appear at different altitudes and winds will be southeasterly moderate. In Aqaba, winds will be northerly moderate and seas calm.	
Min./Max. temp.	
Amman	2 / 15
Aqaba	6 / 20

JORDAN TIMES DAILY GUIDE AND CALENDAR	
Doctors	1 / 16
Jordan Valley	8 / 20
<b>USEFUL TELEPHONE NUMBERS</b>	
<b>NIGHT DUTY</b>	
AMMAN:	
Dr. Rashid Zaitoun	888685
Dr. Nidal Al Dahab	627195
Dr. Bassam Karadabeh	720200
Dr. Yabba Abdul Salam	750772
Firas pharmacy	661912
Ferdous pharmacy	778336
Al Asma pharmacy	637055
Nahash pharmacy	623672
Al Salam pharmacy	626730
Yaqoub pharmacy	644945
Shuqran pharmacy	637660
Najib pharmacy	847632
IRBID:	
Dr. Mazen Shamsi	248056
Al Quds Pharmacy	(-)
ZARQA:	
Dr. Ahmad Al Tarrif	900806
<b>EMERGENCIES</b>	
Food Control Centre	637111
Civil Defence Department	661111
Rescue	630341
Civil Defence Emergency	199
Fire Brigade	621111, 637777
Blood Bank	891228
Highway Police	775121
Traffic Police	661402
Public Security Department	896300
Hotel Complaints	630321
Prison Complaints	605800
Water and Sewerage	661176
Complaints	897467
Amman Municipality	
Complaints	787111
Telephone Information	121
Overseas Calls	910230
Repairs	623101
Ahadi Telephone Repairs	661101
Radio Jordan	773111
Water Authority	774111
Jordan Electricity Authority	815615
<b>HOSPITALS</b>	
AMMAN:	
Hussein Medical Centre	813813/2
Khalid Maternity, J. Amn	64281/6
Khalid Maternity, J. Amn	64281/2
Jabal Amman Maternity	642362
Mallas, J. Amman	636140
Palestine, Shamsun	66171/4
Shamsun Hospital	669131
University Hospital	645495
Al-Mashar Hospital	66727/9
Al-Hamra Hospital	667240/94
Al-Ahli, Aqaba	66416/6
Itarab, Al-Muhajreen	77710/3
Al-Bashir, J. Ashrafieh	77511/26
Army, Marja	89161/15
Queen Alia Hospital	667240/94
Amal Hospital	674155
ZARQA:	
Zarga Govt. Hospital	(09)83323
Zarga National Hospital	10990560
Ibn Sina Hospital	(09)986732
Al-Hikma Modern Hospital	(09)99990
IRBID:	
Princess Baena Hospital	021275555
Greek Catholic Hospital	021272275
<b>FOR THE TRAVELLER</b>	
<b>QUEEN ALIA INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT</b>	
This information is supplied by Royal Jordanian (RJ) Information department at the Queen Alia International Airport Tel. (08)530005, where it should always be verified.	
<b>ARRIVALS</b>	
<b>Royal Jordanian (RJ) Flights (Terminal 1)</b>	
06:20	Vienna (OZ)
06:20	Sanaa (OZ)
06:20	Rome (AZ)
06:20	Dubai (EM)
06:20	Paris, Damascus (AF)
06:20	Amsterdam (KL)
06:20	Cairo (MS)
<b>DEPARTURES</b>	
<b>Royal Jordanian (RJ) Flights (Terminal 1)</b>	
06:00	Beirut (RJ)
06:15	Aqaba (RJ)
06:30	Amman, New York (RJ)
06:30	Paris, Brussels (RJ)
06:30	Geneva, Madrid (RJ)
06:30	London (RJ)
06:30	Cairo (RJ)
06:30	Bangkok, Beirut (RJ)
06:30	Bahrain (RJ)
06:30	Jeddah (RJ)
06:30	Damascus, Larnaca (RJ)
06:30	Abu Dhabi, Dubai (RJ)
<b>Other Flights (Terminal 2)</b>	



## British secretary hopes for realistic peace agreements in 1994

# Hurd pledges to seek to address Jordan's economic concerns

By P.V. Vivekanand  
Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — British Foreign Secretary Douglas Hurd ended a visit to Jordan Thursday saying he was optimistic that "realistic agreements" between Israel and the Arabs could be signed during this year.

Addressing a press conference shortly before his departure, Mr. Hurd said Jordan was not near signing a peace agreement with Israel and faced a lot of work before an accord could be drawn up.

Mr. Hurd, who held talks with His Majesty King Hussein, Prime Minister Abdul Salam Majali and other ministers, said the British government appreciated the economic problems faced by Jordan and would explore means to help address the Kingdom's concerns.

Specifically, he referred to British help for water development projects in south Jordan and said the assistance was reviewed during a meeting he held with Minister of Water and Irrigation Hisham Al Khatib earlier Thursday.

There is a "continuous dialogue" and relationship between Jordan and Britain perhaps closer than any other Arab countries.

Mr. Hurd said Britain stood ready to help Jordan alleviate its foreign debt burden as well as supply equipment to the Kingdom's Armed Forces. He did not elaborate.

The foreign secretary said he also appreciated Jordan's grievances over the over-zealous enforcement of the sanctions against Iraq, causing serious repercussions on the Jordanian economy.

"There are certain very specific practical problems on shipping that were explained to me," he said, referring to the costly delays and higher freight charges that Jordanian importers are facing as a result of the inspection procedures adopted by the enforcers of the sanctions patrolling the Red Sea.

"We British are strongly in favour of the correct and strict implementation of the sanctions, but it needs to be regular, reasonable and not simply bureaucratic," Mr. Hurd said. The reference included Jordan's complaints that applications for U.N. approval for the export of sanctions-exempted Jordanian products to Iraq were being held up while Turkey and Iran, Iraq's two other neighbours, did not face such problems.

"There are examples where the Jordanians feel that the process is not reasonable and it is simply bureaucratic," Mr. Hurd said. "These are things that we can pursue."

"The British government believes in strict implementation of the sanctions, but reasonable implementation of the (Security Council) resolutions which exist," he added.

Mr. Hurd said that he also raised the issue of a Jordanian ban on imports of British meat products imposed after reports of the "crazy cow disease" in Britain. He argued that all Britain's other major trading partners had accepted that the problem was resolved and that British exports were "safe," but "there is still a problem" in Jordan. He expressed hope that the issue would be resolved soon.

Mr. Hurd, who arrived here Wednesday after talks in Lebanon and Israel, following an earlier visit to Syria, said there could be no reversal of the Middle East peace process and that there was a will on all tracks of the Arab-Israeli negotiations to go forward.

"I certainly go home feeling that the will to succeed is greater than the will to destroy because failure equals destruction, failure equals going back to a stage of semi-war, maybe from time to time interrupted by a real war," said the British minister.

"For the Palestinians, failure means going back to a mixture of military occupation and infidels, the kind of mixture we saw half in action yesterday in Gaza," Mr. Hurd said, referring to a visit he paid to the densely populated, squalid Mediterranean coastal strip on Wednesday.

"There is a will to go forward and I believe that in 1994 there will be a reasonable chance of that will expressing itself in realistic agreements," he said. "I cannot be certain, but that is not just my hope, it is a probability."

Britain was not acting as an intermediary in the peace process and it feels now that the parties involved in the Middle East are in direct contact it is up to them to reach and implement agreements, he said.

"We can help by making available our skills," he said, and referred to a British pledge of \$100 million to help the Palestinians develop their building infrastructure. The aid is outside the British contribution to about \$600 million pledged by the European Union (EU).

Answering a question from a British reporter whether there were "major obstacles" holding up a Jordanian-Israeli peace agreement, Mr. Hurd said:

"On the Jordan-Israeli track, obviously there is still work to be done. Much has been achieved... so there is not yet a paper to be signed. His Majesty the King explained to me that he is anxious to do the work before the signature and not to sign before the work."

"I understand the reasons for that. That is his policy and I respect that."

Mr. Hurd described his visit to Jordan as aimed at getting "some perceptions, some ideas (and) some impressions from here which I cannot get from elsewhere (because of an) informality borne out of long friendship."

"Both Britain and Jordan are looking forward to the completion of the peace process," he said. "No one pretends that it is going to be easy..."

Mr. Hurd described as "understandable" Israel's justifications for continuing to occupy parts of South Lebanon on "security grounds," and said: "As I understand it, Israel is ready to withdraw. Israel has no wish to add to her territory by taking in Lebanese villages or Lebanese countryside."

"I believe that, as a result of my discussions in Beirut and with the Israelis, it should be possible to reach an agreement on (the Lebanese-Israeli track), that will pave the way for the full implementation of the Taif agreement for the full recovery of Lebanon of territorial independence."

Mr. Hurd was referring to an inter-Lebanese accord reached in 1989 under Arab League and Saudi mediation in the Saudi resort town of Taif, providing for the departure of all foreign forces, including the Syrians and Israelis, from Lebanese territory, in stages, leading up to the full exercise of Beirut's sovereignty over all of Lebanon.



MILITARY VISIT: His Majesty King Hussein Thursday attended a celebration marking the 43rd anniversary of the First Royal Armoured Battalion and inspected display of documentary pictures relating the development of the battalion and lists of martyrs. In a brief speech to the officers and troops, the King congratulated them on the anniversary, urged them to acquire training and be ready to defend the homeland in the face of any danger. King Hussein said he took pride in his armed forces, the shield of the nation. He said that the anniversary should serve as a day of remembrance of the martyrs who fell in defence of their homeland.



Information Minister Jawad Al Anani (left) meeting with the German parliamentarians Thursday.

## German deputies leave after meeting planning and information ministers

AMMAN (J.T.) — Two German federal parliamentarians Friday wound up a several day visit to Jordan and left for Damascus on the third leg of their tour of the Arab region.

Peter Kittelmann and Dandward Bunnett discussed the Middle East issue and the peace process with Information Minister Jawad Al Anani on Thursday, the last day of their visit.

Dr. Anani explained the Jordanian position and Amman's continued efforts to boost the momentum for a permanent and comprehensive peace.

He also pointed out that the government was coordinating efforts with the Palestinians to reach the aspired settlement.

In reviewing the consequences of the 1967 war, Dr. Anani said that the Kingdom

has shouldered heavy burdens and spent no less than \$16 billion as a result of the displacement of the Palestinians and their flooding the east bank of the Jordan River.

The two German parliamentarians Thursday met with the Foreign Affairs Committee of the Lower House of Parliament and discussed the Middle East and Palestine.

After hearing the committee chairman's views, the German parliamentarians urged Jordan to pursue the peace process and said peace was bound to benefit all peoples of the region.

In discussing democracy, they said Jordan has an example in democracy by its free parliamentary elections.

Committee Chairman Abdul Hadi Al Majali voiced Jordan's

appreciation of Germany's continued economic and technical assistance to the Kingdom.

The parliamentarians held a meeting with Planning Minister Ziyad Fariz who outlined his ministry's role in socio-economic development of Jordan since the 1950s.

Noting that German assistance to Jordan was contributing to the country's development, the minister said the Jordanian economy was a free market economy that encourages foreign investments.

Mr. Kittelmann said that he would call for continued supply of economic and political aid to Jordan by various world countries, especially the European Community to help Jordan continue its peace efforts and to enable the Kingdom to meet the challenge.

## Jordan reduces illiteracy rate from 22% to 15%

AMMAN (Petra) — Jordan has succeeded in reducing illiteracy rate of persons above the age of 15 to 15 per cent by the end of 1993, down from 22.5 per cent in 1988, thanks to the intensive adult and literacy education programmes adopted by the Ministry of Education, according to Mr. Ahmad Al Sous, senior Education Ministry official.

In a statement Friday, on the eve of Jordan's observance of the Arab Literacy Day Saturday, Mr. Sous said Jordan was striving to lower the rate of illiterate to citizens of 15 years, and above to mere eight per cent by the year 2000.

This year, the Kingdom has 687 literacy and adult education centres providing basic education to 11,580 male and female illiterates noted Mr. Sous.

To prepare for this intensive campaign, the Ministry of Education has trained 600 full-time teachers to shoulder the task of providing basic education to the illiterates of Jordan, he pointed out.

It is due to these strenuous efforts which yielded excellent results that the ministry won the 1993 international award assigned by UNESCO (United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation) for

countries with remarkable effort to combating illiteracy, noted Mr. Sous.

Care for educating adults and illiterate persons started in Jordan as early as 1932, when the ministry decided to open literacy and adult education classes in urban and rural regions, said Mr. Sous.

Noting that programmes in this regard have been continuing ever since, Mr. Sous said that in the past seven years these programmes were intensified and spread at the national level.

Indeed, the recommendations of the 1987 Jordan national conference on education included special provisions for the care of the illiterate, and their training in special centres run by the ministry, he added.

The U.N. General Assembly considered 1990 as the year for the illiterates, in order to promote the drive to rid the world of illiteracy, continued Mr. Sous.

The official pointed out that as a result of the efforts to provide education to Jordanians, at least 97 per cent of children of the learning age in Jordan are now registered in one of the schools which run side by side with the literacy centres around the Kingdom.

## Women seek changes in labour legislation

By Rana Hussein  
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — Jordanian Women's Union (JWU) Thursday announced the formation of a follow-up committee to formulate the necessary amendments to the labour law with regard to women's rights.

The final draft will be presented to Parliament for consideration.

The recommendations will tackle the most serious violations of women's rights in the labour law, according to Jafar Halaseh, director of women's department at the Ministry of Labour.

During a two-hour lecture at the Phoenix Gallery, Ms. Halaseh pointed to the dire need to change the labour law in light of the recent developments and social changes that occurred in the society.

"The number of women joining the labour force is increasing dramatically while legislations and laws have not been amended to protect these changes," Ms. Halaseh said. "The condition of women at work are still unacceptable due to discriminatory laws and legislations."

Ms. Halaseh referred to the inequality between men and women at work, especially in wages, and noted that women were being illegally exploited while given lower salaries than men.

She further explained that in many cases women were being hired for a short training period without payment and they get sacked out of their jobs after that period.

Ms. Halaseh listed many gaps in the labour law which were inconsistent with international treaties and conventions. Among these were:

— Article 35 which stipulates that owners of establishments who have more than 30 women at work should accommodate the institution with a suitable nursery room

for children under the age of six.

The proposed new article suggests changing it to become 20 women, instead of thirty, and to hire a qualified nurse to take care of the children of the working women.

At present, Ms. Halaseh said, the law does not impose more than JD 20 in fines on the establishments if they do not incorporate nurseries within their institutions. The proposed recommendation is to impose a JD 100 fine to be multiplied if the requirement was not met.

— Article 27 should include that the owner of an establishment does not have the right to fire or send a notification to fire an employee if she was pregnant at the beginning period. This clause is not available in the current law, according to Ms. Halaseh.

— Article 52 stipulates that the maternity leave period is six weeks, with half-pay. The new proposed law, Ms. Halaseh said, is increasing the maternity period leave to 10 weeks with full pay.

Article 72 should provide for a one hour paid leave a day for the mother to lactate. "We hope that these issues will be considered at the Parliament when it is presented in its final form," said Ms. Asma Khader, president of JWU.

Ms. Khader said that after presenting these recommendations, JWU will cover rural areas, where women are being discriminated against.

"We have organised several open sessions and programmes and rounds of discussion in some camps outside the city, and we have been receiving demands to conduct activities in other rural areas in the Kingdom," she added.

Ms. Khader said JWU plans to expand its activities to the whole Kingdom, and to become an institution to serve all women in the society.

## Iraqi dinar takes a plunge in Amman

By a Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — The embattled Iraqi dinar, still a source of hopes of bumper gains for speculators despite setbacks last year, took another plunge this week in Jordan after signs faded of an early lifting of international sanctions against Iraq.

The Iraqi dinar was worth eight fils in the local markets on Thursday, down from 10 six weeks ago, when Iraq accepted long-term monitoring of its arms development programme as part of the ceasefire resolutions that ended the 1991 war over Kuwait.

Investors hoped that the Iraqi acceptance of the key provisions in the ceasefire would lead to a partial lifting of the sanctions, but as it turned out, it could be another four to eight months before the U.N. Security Council would seriously consider any relaxation of the sweeping embargo.

In a regular two-month review of the sanctions, the Security Council made no move in December to relax the sweeping embargo, which has choked off Iraq's oil exports — Baghdad's mainstay income.

Iraqi imports of food and medicine are the only exemption from the sanctions, in place since the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait in August 1990.

In Baghdad, the currency, whose official value remains at \$3.1, was traded at 145 dinars to the American dollar, reports said Friday.

It indicated that government moves to relax foreign exchange controls and allowing

Iraqis to operate bank accounts in foreign currency have done little to restore public confidence in the Iraqi economy.

Furthermore, Iraqis say, they are also apprehensive that they might lose their foreign currency holdings altogether if the government moved in a swoop to seize all bank accounts in foreign currency whenever it found fit to do so.

In Amman, the volume of trading in the dinar declined dramatically since May last year, when the Iraqi government withdrew from circulation part of its pre-war currency. But, dealers said, enough interest remained among speculators to invest in the Iraqi dinar.

Surprisingly, even the withdrawn notes continue to be traded. The so-called "Swiss" dinars were replaced by the Iraqi government with new locally printed currency in May 1993, dealing a severe blow to thousands of Jordanians who were hoping to reap huge returns as and when the sanctions were lifted.

It is estimated that Jordanians, including those who had accepted payment in the "Swiss" dinars from the Iraqi government in payment for goods and services under special permissions issued by the Central Bank of Iraq, lost up to \$100 million in the fiasco.

Jordanian government efforts to secure Iraqi compensation for businessmen who had accepted the currency in good faith did not make much headway except Iraqi promises that the issue would be studied.

"Many people are still holding on to the cancelled notes, believing that once the sanctions are lifted and the Iraqi economy regains its strength some way would be found to make good their losses," said a banker.

It also partly explained the continued interest of some in buying up the cancelled notes.

The "latest quote" for the "Swiss" notes, according to market sources, is between 2.5 and three fils each depending on the volume being offered.

The flow of Iraqi currency to

Jordan has all but dried up. The number of Iraqi travellers — potential carriers of the currency — declined sharply after the Iraqi government imposed a whopping 15,000 Iraqi dinars travel tax for every Iraqi wishing to leave the country.

The amount, worth about \$120 at black market prices, represents more than three years' salary for an average Iraqi.

The high tax has ensured that only businessmen and rich Iraqis with access to dollars leave the country, Iraqis said.

## WHAT'S GOING ON

- ★ Art exhibition by Sudanese artist Abdul Qadir Al Bakhit at the Royal Cultural Centre.
- ★ Art exhibition by artist Sadik Kwaish entitled "Tallams" at Balaadina Art Gallery.
- ★ Art exhibition by Jordanian artist Suha Mash'al at the Royal Cultural Centre.
- ★ Art exhibition by Iraqi artist Abdul Jabbar Sahman on bedouin culture at the Royal Cultural Centre.
- ★ Exhibition on the 100th anniversary of the death of French novelist Guy De Maupassant at the French Cultural Centre.
- ★ Exhibition of Iraqi books at the Royal Cultural Centre.
- ★ Art exhibition by a number of Jordanian artists entitled "The Sixth Exhibition — Samples From The Contemporary Jordanian Art 93" at the Spanish Cultural Centre.
- ★ Exhibition "Prints and Drawings of Fakhrelnisa Zeid" (1915-1991) until the 15th of January '94 at Darat al Funun of the Abdul Hameed Shoman Foundation. Also showing the "Permanent" Exhibition. (Tel. 643251/2).
- ★ Drama for children entitled "The Question" at the Royal Cultural Centre at 11:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m.

## LECTURE

- ★ Lecture in Arabic entitled "The Sociology of the International Community" by Dr. Abediseld Abu Hantash at the Goethe-Institut at 7:00 p.m.

## HOME NEWS IN BRIEF

### Farhan reelected IAF secretary general

AMMAN (J.T.) — The Islamic Action Front's (IAF) executive office Thursday selected Ishaq Al Farhan as its secretary-general, and Dr. Abdul Latif Arabiyat as deputy secretary-general. The office also selected Mohammad Oweidah and Ahmad Tanash as administrative and financial assistants respectively. The executive office also accepted the resignation of Abdul Rahim Ekor, who was elected in absentia as member of the executive office. The office named Ziad Khalifah, the first alternate member, as Mr. Ekor's replacement.

### Special education training course ends

AMMAN (Petra) — A seven-day training course on "developing methods for teaching gifted students" concluded here Thursday. The course included lectures about characteristics of gifted children, modern trends in developing appropriate curricula for gifted children, methods of developing innovative skills and problem-solving techniques, and stimulating questions that help gifted students think critically. Taking part in the course were teachers from the Ministry of Education, the United Nations Relief and Works Agency (UNRWA) schools, the armed forces schools, Salt Pilot Centre and representatives of private schools, in addition to the Jubilee School.

### Handicapped children begin winter camp

AMMAN (Petra) — A winter camp for handicapped children will be held in Waqas town in the northern Jordan Valley region as of Saturday. A total of 50 handicapped children from centres in various refugee camps are participating in the camp which is organised by the United Nations Refugees and Works Agency (UNRWA).

### Masri heads society for freedom

AMMAN (Petra) The National Society for Enhancement of Freedoms and Democracy has elected a seven member administrative committee, headed by Speaker of the Lower House Taher Al Masri. The other committee members are: Salah Jarrar, Muayad Nihyar, Nazik Bitar, Sultan Hattab, Jasser Tadros and Adnan Toubasi. The society was established in March 1993 to enhance democracy, promote public awareness about the concept of democracy and to work towards ensuring freedoms and human rights. The society's founding members are Prime Minister Abdul Salam Al Majali, Taher Masri, Awad Khleifat, Kamal Al Qasbi, Adel Abu Khajil, Assad Abdul Rahman, Salah Jarrar, Taleh Al Rifai, Nazik Bitar, Jasser Tadros, Sultan Al Hattab, Adnan Toubasi and Muayyad Mihyar.

## Ministries prepare to combat rat raid

AMMAN (J.T.) — The ministries of agriculture, municipal and rural affairs and health have joined forces with the Mafrqa Municipality to rid the city and neighbouring regions of the rats that have been causing extensive damage to property.

After repeated public complaints to the local authorities, the public health committees met in Mafrqa Thursday and set up a committee, representing the three ministries and the municipality, to carry out a survey of the affected regions and the volume of the problem in preparation for a campaign against the rodents.

At the same time, the local municipalities said they would join hands in working out a plan for combating the rats. Mafrqa Municipality has requested a JD 50,000 grant from the Ministry of Municipal and Rural Affairs to buy the necessary poisonous materials

to kill the rodents. Reports have said that the rats had been infesting homes, farms and, especially, garbage sites.

It was due to the fact that the garbage was continually accumulating in certain areas that the rats have been multiplying in great numbers and roaming around homes and streets, said an earlier report in the local press.

Another report said that a two and a half month old Mafrqa girl lost a piece of her right toe when a rat in her house gnawed at it.

Other reports said that the neighbouring refugee camps, east of Irbid, has suffered extensive material losses due to the rats.

In July last year, several concerned government ministries helped Irbid Municipality to rid the Irbid farms and residential districts of large numbers of rats.



## Jordan Times

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GEORGE S. HAWATMEH

Editorial and advertising offices:  
Jordan Press Foundation,

University Road, P.O. Box 6710, Amman, Jordan.

Telephone: 6671716, 670141-4

Telex: 21497 ALRAI JO

Facsimile: 696183

The Jordan Times is published daily except Fridays.  
Subscription and advertising rates are available from the  
Jordan Times advertising department.

## Sigh of relief

THE MINISTER of Information, Dr. Jawad al-Najjar, put it appropriately yesterday, after the signing of the Jordanian-PLO economic agreement, when he said that the accord would be comforting for the two peoples in Jordan and Palestine. Indeed the seemingly tense atmosphere that characterised the otherwise warm relations between the leaderships of Jordan and Palestine was disturbing for people on both sides of the Jordan River.

A majority of Jordanians and Palestinians supported the start of the peace talks in Madrid 1991. They saw in Jordan providing an umbrella for the Palestinian side a good omen and a strong indication at the depth of ties between the two peoples. Then, and thanks to the persistence of Palestinian negotiators and a still of the Jordanian team led by Dr. Abdul Majali, it was possible for the Palestinians to wrest from the Israelis recognition of their status as an independent state.

When the Palestinians and the Israelis arrived their declaration of principles in secret talks Oslo. That took Jordanians and everybody by surprise. Yet Jordan chose, after absorbing the shock, to declare its full support for the agreement and for the Palestinian negotiators. And one day after the historic accord was signed between PLO and Israel in Washington on Sept. 13, Jordan went ahead and signed its own agenda for the peace talks at was otherwise ready long before but sitting for progress on the Palestinian track. Unfortunately, the Palestinian brothers were submerged in their bargaining with the Israelis that they relegated their coordination with the Jordanians. Jordan, of course, would have protested had it not been to the fact at every aspect of negotiations between Palestinians and Israelis would, one way or the other, affect Jordan. Hence, His Majesty King Hussein's warning last week: Coordinate or get each of us go his own way.

Whether that warning was behind the sending its negotiating team to Amman on Wednesday is besides the point. What has apparently emerged is a comprehensive agreement between the two sides on most of the issues affecting their negotiations with Israel and understanding to hold more frequent coordination talks between them.

Now that the two sides have settled the spate, people in Jordan and the occupied territories can focus their efforts on the means strengthening peace prospects. Meanwhile, the two sides need to keep the momentum and work together for the good of their peoples.

## BASIC PRESS COMMENTARIES

ARABIC daily Thursday echoed His Majesty King Hussein's words two days ago that there will be no separate Jordan-Israeli peace and that the peace being sought by the two sides should be comprehensive and just and acceptable for future generations. The King's words included in a speech to the Public Security and Civil Defence forces and more reading because, in it, the King has laid the true Jordanian position and firm stand vis-a-vis the peace process and the negotiations, said the daily. Therefore, the King made it clear that there can be no federation between Jordan and Palestine because this will be a chain of efforts to attain coordination at all levels between the two peoples on both sides of the River Jordan to provide support to the PLO, the Kingdom wants to see the PLO leadership is truly representing the Palestinian people and if the PLO maintains its credibility in the peace process, the King is keen to maintaining a chain of coordination between the Jordanians and the Palestinians, and does not want to see any more procrastination and delays in making decisions in this respect, the paper said. On the whole, the King's speech has placed matters in their own perspective, emphasising that the Kingdom is determined never to compromise the national soil.

THE Palestinians and the Jordanians are watching with hope to get good results from the bilateral talks started between them in Amman Wednesday as the two sides are working towards their common goals, said Al-Jazeera daily. The meetings in Amman constitute one more link in the chain of efforts to attain coordination at all levels between the two peoples, the paper noted. There is no doubt that the two sides are holding talks in good faith and in a spirit of sincerity as they both face the looming challenges and developments in the region and the events are pressing fast, making them pressed for time to achieve good results, the paper said. There can be no real coordination between the two sides unless the Jordanians and the Palestinians reach genuine coordination first.

## Jordanian Perspective

# Small steps on a long way ahead

THE so-called ultimatum (that's how the Western media described it) that His Majesty King Hussein served last week on Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) Chairman Yasser Arafat to come clear with Jordan and revive coordination or go separate ways is seen by many in the Arab World and elsewhere as pressure on Mr. Arafat and a Jordanian tactic. Unfortunately those who see the King's pointed comments from that perspective are short-sighted simply because they fail to grasp that the Jordanian stand did not come out of a vacuum.

For them, the King's repeated references to Jordan's commitment to respecting the PLO as the sole representative of the Palestinian people and the assistance that Jordan extended to enable the Palestinians to participate in the 26-month-old Arab-Israeli peace process meant a complaint that Jordan was being sidelined in the Israel-PLO negotiations on implementing the groundbreaking autonomy agreement signed on Sept. 13.

It is naive for anyone to think that Jordan could be sidelined or turned into a player who reacts to events rather than initiating things. Jordan did not live through the tragedies of the Arab World, particularly those which befell the Palestinian people, to be told, indirectly or directly, to take a back seat until such a time other players are ready to deal.

Quite simply, Jordan cannot afford to do and will not do so regardless of the limitations imposed on it. We have our national concerns as an independent sovereign state and we will not let those concerns be under the mercy of anyone. What we would like to have is a clear position based on a genuine desire for Arab coordination which will protect Arab interests in the context of the conflict with Israel without compromising or jeopardising Jordan's national interests, which do not threaten anyone else's or come at the expense of another.

The King's clear call on the PLO to drop all references to a future Jordanian-Palestinian confederation until such time as the Palestinians could exercise their legitimate territorial and political rights stemmed from a constant reminder of the fact that many independence-seeking Palestinians were slowly losing confidence in the peace process because they see a confederation dominated by Jordan as the end result.

Preoccupation with the problem of the past, mainly the fallout of the Palestinian problem, has been plaguing Jordan's political life for a long time. And it is unthinkable now we continue to pay the price for future shapes and eventualities based on assumptions that harm the entire process of bringing about security and stability that we all long for.

For us in Jordan, having had to share a major part of the suffering along with the Palestinians, the strong comments the King made last week are very clear: Unless the PLO came forth with clearly defined political and economic options and worked out an unambiguous and transparent agreement on political and economic coordination with Jordan, the people

on the both sides of the River Jordan stood to suffer while Israel reaped the benefits of the disarray in our ranks.

If someone would like to interpret it as putting pressure on Mr. Arafat at a time when he is grappling with the task of extracting concessions from Israel in the self-rule negotiations, then let it be so.

It should be understood that the PLO has acquired not only the status of the sole legitimate representative of the Palestinian people but also the responsibilities that go with it. One cannot have a half-measure of a representative status without having to shoulder the obligations and responsibilities that go with it. Having to deal with the Jordanian position, stated publicly after having put up with procrastination and reticence, is part of that responsibility.

The sympathy that we may feel for Mr. Arafat in his predicament with the Israelis does not necessarily mean that we wait patiently until such time he is fully convinced that he could not get anything more out of Israel during the interim period.

A simple example in this context is the PLO's quest for an independent Palestinian monetary authority in the occupied territories. For all practical purposes, it could have secured Israeli approval for such an authority had it not been the attached demand that the authority be also empowered to issue a Palestinian currency. In the end, Israel ruled out both.

In the same vein, many of the so-called experts on the Middle East conflict tend to describe the reopening of Jordanian commercial banks in the occupied territories as the main objective of the Jordanians' strategy. Again, the question that they do not care to answer is: Can it be as simple as that? Can just the reopening of the banks mean a total and satisfactory answer to the concerns that Jordan has, including the human dimension of the conflict?

Whether anyone likes it or not, Jordan has genuine concerns over the course of the political and economic developments taking place in the context of the Israel-PLO negotiations on implementing self-rule. The Kingdom simply cannot wait round the corner after the PLO and Israel thrash out an agreement and then engage the PLO in accords that would inevitably have to be based on whatever Israel is willing to grant the Palestinians in the first place during the interim period.

Inasmuch as we in Jordan anxious to ensure that the Palestinians regain their territorial and political rights and that the autonomy accord succeeds in reaching the half-way point before "final status" negotiations start, the fact remains that it was the PLO which worked out the Oslo accord despite all its ambiguities and contradictions and, as such, it cannot blame anyone else or let anyone else pay the price for its shortcomings.

At the same time, it does mean either that Jordan would like to sit back and await the results of the scenarios being played out between Israel and the PLO. The most disturbing element

By Dr. Musa Keilani

## The Week in Print

# Jordanian-Palestinian coordination is only solution to reaching peace

Reviewed by Elia Nasrallah

The local Arabic papers last week gave prominence to the ongoing Jordanian-Palestinian talks on coordination of efforts regarding the peace process and their own future relationship. The press also discussed the Middle East peace, Arab affairs and a host of domestic issues.

Under the title: "Let this be the last of the crises between the two sides", a columnist in Al-Dustour said that all the eyes are turned to Amman now to watch for good results coming out of the continuing Jordanian-Palestinian meetings.

Everyone concerned about the Palestinian-Jordanian relationship is waiting to see the results of talks which aim at coordinating the two sides' positions in the coming round of peace talks and also to pave the ground for sound and fruitful relationships in the coming stage, said Taher Al-Udwan.

Success of these talks, said the writer, means failure of Israel's attempts to split the united people and failure to achieve its own policy of dealing separately with Arab states in order to impose its hegemony on them.

Commenting on the ongoing talks, Sultan Al-Hattab from Al-Rai said that only the people on the two sides of the River Jordan can decide the future formula of union between the Jordanians and the Palestinians.

Sultan Al-Hattab said that King Hussein in his speech in the past week had demanded that no Jordanian or Palestinian ought to talk about such a development until the land has been liberated and the usurped territories returned to their lawful owners, thus putting an end to speculation about the confederation.

Tareq Masarweh, a columnist in Al-Rai, said that

since the days of Shuqairi, the former PLO leader, Jordan has been accused of dominating the West Bank. The writer said that Jordan was in a weak position because it had always been defending the Palestinian cause and not its own; therefore, King Hussein has decided that the Palestinians should handle their own affairs.

Noting that the King had accepted the 1974 Rabat summit resolution, which announced that the PLO is the sole representative of the Palestinians, the writer said that the King has the right now to demand that united action take place if the relationship with the Palestinians is to continue, because, he said, the burdens are too heavy and coordination is a must at this stage.

By rejecting the idea of confederation under the present circumstances, King Hussein has rejected the Israeli conspiracy against Palestine and Jordan, said Fahd Al-Fanek in Al-Rai.

The writer said that Israel had wanted to fuse this confederation in order to impose its own influence on Jordan through the Palestinian autonomy rule which the Jewish state is planning to transform into an entity subjected to the Israeli economy.

The writer said that the King has put an end to the idea of confederation at this stage because this idea can only be discussed once the Palestinians had won their freedom in an independent homeland.

Mahmoud Rimawi, a columnist in Al-Rai, expressed his view that Jordanian-Palestinian coordination is a must if the peace process is to achieve its aspired end. Differences serve no Arab party and only through a united stand can the Arabs face the challenge of peace, said the writer. There is no alternative to coordination among the Jordanian and Palestinian brothers as they are the closest to the Palestinian problem and most affected by the results of the coming peace, he said.

We had thought that 1993 was the year of peace for the Middle East region, but we have entered the new year with no signs of it being on its way, said Mohammad Kawash in Al-Dustour.

We had thought that the

Oslo deal was an optimistic sign for a good beginning of Israeli withdrawals from occupied Arab land, starting early in 1994, but all these hopes have not been fulfilled to date, added the writer.

Of course, he said, nothing was achieved since the Israelis are holding on to their intransigent positions and it seems that after all the efforts no one, including Washington, is able to exercise pressure on Israel to honour its pledges, said the writer. Only a miracle, he added, can break the deadlock now.

Tareq Masarweh commented on a visit by Qatar's foreign minister to Jordan last week by quoting him as saying that the sanctions on Iraq should end and that Arab differences should vanish.

The columnist, who writes in Al-Rai, said that calls for pan-Arab solidarity have been coming not only from Qatar but also from Oman and other states in the region, reflecting the feelings of the Arab masses.

The two Gulf states are spearheading efforts in the Gulf region to end the plight of the Iraqi people, a step which is ought to be taken by the other Arab countries, he said.

Indeed, it is more reasonable and honourable for the Arabs to end the sanctions on Iraq before the other world countries can take the steps in this direction, added the writer.

It was Prince Hassan who opened the way for the Qatari minister's visit to Jordan to break the ice in relations with the Gulf states, said Mohammad Kawash in Al-Dustour.

The Qatari minister's visit gave a strong indication of Qatar's positive response to Jordan's call for solidarity and brotherly relations, said the writer.

He said that Arab states' differences, caused by the Gulf crisis, should be transcended in the interest of the Arab Nation.

Saleh Al-Qallab, a columnist in Al-Dustour, tackled the problem arising from the street stalls and street vendors on the pavements of Zarqa, the second largest Jordanian city.

The writer said that the local authorities in Zarqa are



M. KAHIL

now chasing away the street vendors because their stalls are allegedly obstructing traffic and serving as a black market.

But these vendors have been seeing this kind of trade for years and this is the only means of earning a decent living for their families, he said.

The solution to this problem lies in creating an open air market for the vendors in the Zarqa region, which the authorities have promised to do, the writer said. He expressed hope that the problem would end soon.

A columnist in Sawt Al-Shaab daily wondered when the Amman-Jerash road and the Amman-Dead Sea road would be completed, after years since the start of this job. Nazih Qousus said the public has been promised over and over again that the roads would be completed soon, but the deadline was overlooked every time.

These two roads are essential for promoting tourism in Jordan and we demand that they be finished as soon as possible, said the writer. He said that the Ministry of Public Works is responsible to see to it that the work is completed according to the term of the contract and in the public interest.

A columnist in Al-Dustour raised the question of dual decisions by successive governments: "referring in particular to a specific project in Aqaba. Ahmed Shaker said that under the present government the decision was taken to set up tourist facilities along the southern coast of Aqaba and a local firm had been awarded a contract and started work, only to be stopped by the present government last month.

The writer questioned the wisdom behind the order to halt the project in which the local company has invested a fortune and which, when completed, would earn the Kingdom a fortune from the tourist business.

## LETTERS

### Empty symbols

To the Editor:

The banana republic is an old phenomenon in the relationship between developed and underdeveloped countries. This phenomenon is actually the backbone of neo-colonialism, whereby the economic interests of foreign corporations are preserved and promoted in an ex-colony by a strong paramilitary force. These banana republics possess only the trappings and symbols of independence; a flag, a president, a big police force.

Latin America was at one point a bunch of banana republics whose resources, which were primarily agricultural, were usurped by corporations like the United Fruit Company, which essentially became the decision makers in Latin America after formal colonialism ended at the turn of the century. This was no blessing for the people of Latin America nor for the continent itself. Neo-colonialism and banana republics are in fact the direct cause of poverty, incurable environmental catastrophes, the non-existence of basic human rights, and severe underdevelopment of the continent.

Again, it is important to emphasise that banana republics have been around for almost one hundred years. It is clear that the transition from colonised entity to banana republic is not beneficial for the indigenous population.

Thus, it is alarming that the Palestinian people could be subjected to a legal status even less than that of a banana republic; a banana self-autonomous region. This banana self-autonomous region actually has no defined borders, it is physically disjointed, it has few natural resources, the most significant being small banana and citrus groves owned mostly by wealthy Jerusalemite families, and it contains the most densely populated and one of the most polluted areas on earth, which, according to Edward Said, makes Soweilo look like a resort town.

Have the Palestinians become so obsessed by symbols that they have forgotten what these symbols ought to represent: raising a flag, holding paramilitary parades, having a president? What value do these symbols have to a banana self-autonomous region? Will these symbols bring about the development of the physically disjointed areas? Will the Palestinians be allowed to determine their own destiny? Will they exercise their basic human rights and enjoy basic civil liberties?

It is not symbols that last, but what these symbols stand for. Is it not futile to have symbols which stand for nothing?

Zaid Zalaitimo,  
Amman.

The Jordan Times welcomes letters and contributions from its readers on any subject they wish to tackle. Letters intended for publication, however, should contain the writer's full name and preferably address as well. Names can be withheld only upon request and under special circumstances. Letters are subject to editing. The newspaper is not responsible for the return of unused manuscripts.



## Depression and creativity An old idea is gathering new scientific support

By Natalie Angier

NEW YORK — As long as there have been poets to pierce the darkness with their diaphanous songs, and painters to capture rays of sun shattering on cool cathedral stone, and artists of all persuasions to consort with the gods and articulate the union, there have been social critics to notice that an awful lot of these creative people are mentally unsound. "Why is it," Aristotle asked in the fourth century B.C., "that all men who are outstanding in philosophy, poetry or the arts are melancholic?" Three hundred years ago, the English poet John Dryden wrote: "Great wits are sure to madness near allied / And thin partitions do their bounds divide," a sweet couplet that has since degenerated into the sorry cliché. "There is a thin line between genius and madness."

Yet as with any cliché worth the iteration, this one has a sizable grain of truth in it. After many decades of quarrelling over how to define slippery and often subjective terms like "madness" and "creativity," psychiatrists, neurologists and evolutionary geneticists at last have accrued powerful evidence that the link between certain mental disorders and artistic achievement is real. Study after study has shown that people in the arts suffer disproportionately high rates of mood disorders, particularly manic depression and major depression.

Those with manic depression, or bipolar disorder, oscillate between summit and abyss — between a sense of grandeur and recklessness, a boundless, snuckabout energy that feasts on itself and disdains the need for sleep; and a profound depression in which anguish, lethargy and self-hatred dominate. Many of the most eminent creators seem to have

had full-blown manic depression, others have had milder forms of the disorder and still others have suffered repeated episodes of major depression, the same bleakness seen in the downswing of manic depression but without its euphoric counterpart.

As Dr. Kay Redfield Jamison points out in her recent book, *Touched with Fire: Manic Depressive Illness and the Artistic Temperament*, the list of artists in whom manic depression or severe depression has been diagnosed with confidence is a pantheon of

glory: Lord Byron, Percy Bysshe Shelley, Herman Melville, Robert Schumann, Virginia Woolf, Samuel Taylor Coleridge, Robert Lowell and Theodore Roethke, to name but a very few.

"Most of the best studies in this area have only been done in the last few years," Dr. Jamison, a professor of psychiatry at the Johns Hopkins University School of Medicine in Baltimore, said in an interview. "People think this whole area of research is very squishy, very puffy and unsubstantiated. They don't

realise how solid and consistent the work really is." Psychiatrists have found that among distinguished artists, the rates of manic depression and major depression are 10 to 30 times as prevalent as in the population at large.

Importantly, the periods of either mania or depression are interrupted by long stretches of normality in which the artists appear in command of their work.

"People have a problem with the idea that someone can be both very healthy and very ill," Dr. Jamison said. "But those with manic depression can be very scared and extremely confident at the same time. And it takes that hyper-confidence when you're breaking down borders in art and doing things that haven't been done before."

Although creativity is obviously an essential element in many professions, the link between creativity and mental instability is more pronounced in the arts than in other fields. For example, Dr. Arnold M. Ludwig, a professor of psychiatry at the University of Kentucky Medical Centre in Lexington and author of a forthcoming book, *The Price of Greatness* looked at the incidence of psychiatric illness among 1,004 eminent men and women.

Considering individuals in eight creative-arts professions and 10 other professions, of the stature of Aldous Huxley, Alexander Graham Bell, Albert Einstein and Henri Matisse, Dr. Ludwig discovered that psychiatric disturbances were far more common among the artists than among the others. For example, the rate of alcoholism was 60 per cent among actors and 41 per cent among novelists, but only 3 per cent among those in the physical sciences and 10 per cent among military officers.

Some scientists suggest that because manic-depressive patients are ever riding the biochemical express between emotional extremes, their brains end up more complexly wired and remain more persistently plastic than do the brains of less mercurial sorts. That heightened interconnectedness between one neural neighbourhood and the next, as well as an ongoing receptivity to new information, may allow a person with a mood disorder to synthesise seemingly incongruous thoughts and to reimagine the ordinary into the extraordinary — the essence of artistic creation.

Preliminary brain imaging studies do indicate that different regions of the brain are perturbed during either manic or depressive episodes, bolstering the idea that a bipolar mood disorder could be a global arousal of mental activity.

Dr. Jamison and others also propose that the excessive energy of a manic episode may give rise to a volcano of ideas that the mind can then shape into something meaningful during the less frenetic, more sceptical moments of a depression or a bout of normality.

Some researchers are looking at the problem from an

evolutionary angle, arguing that manic depression is not a disease but a trait, a fairly common genetic variation on a temperamental theme that in prehistoric times conferred strong advantages to those who inherited it. From family and twin studies, researchers have concluded that a predisposition to manic depression is strongly inherited (although recent attempts to isolate a gene have proved fruitless). Given the

prevalence of manic depression in the population, the gene or genes responsible for the disorder could not possibly be around by chance. Instead, geneticists argue, the trait has been retained by evolution for a reason.

"If this were simply an erroneous, random mutation, you'd expect to see maybe 1 in 3,000 people with the disorder," said Dr. Daniel Willson, who divides his time between practising clinical psychiatry at Harvard Medical School and studying anthropology at Cambridge University in England. "Instead, the incidence is at least 1 in 100 or even higher, whether you're looking at people in New York City or the Kalahari Desert. So you're talking about a gene system that is 30, even 100 times more common than it ought to be —" *New York Times*.

### Epilepsy's impact on artistry

APART FROM mood disorders, other disturbances of the brain have been associated with artistic creation, in particular temporal lobe epilepsy. In this disease, the temporal lobes on the sides of the brain, where memory and feelings reside, are intermittently seized by chaotic storms of electrical hyperactivity.

Although the seizures may be undetectable to observers, they can prompt symptoms like hallucinations, powerful religious sensations, fury, fear, joy and — a blessing for those in the arts — an unquenchable desire to write or draw, a desire that persists even after the seizure is over.

Seizures are different physiological events from episodes of mania or depression, but they can exert on an artist a similar sense of grandeur and mastery.

Thom Jones, whose recent collection of short stories, *"The Paganist at Rest"* (1993), is a finalist for the National Book Award, said his temporal lobe epilepsy, which he traces to a brain injury suffered while boxing, profoundly defines his personality and his work.

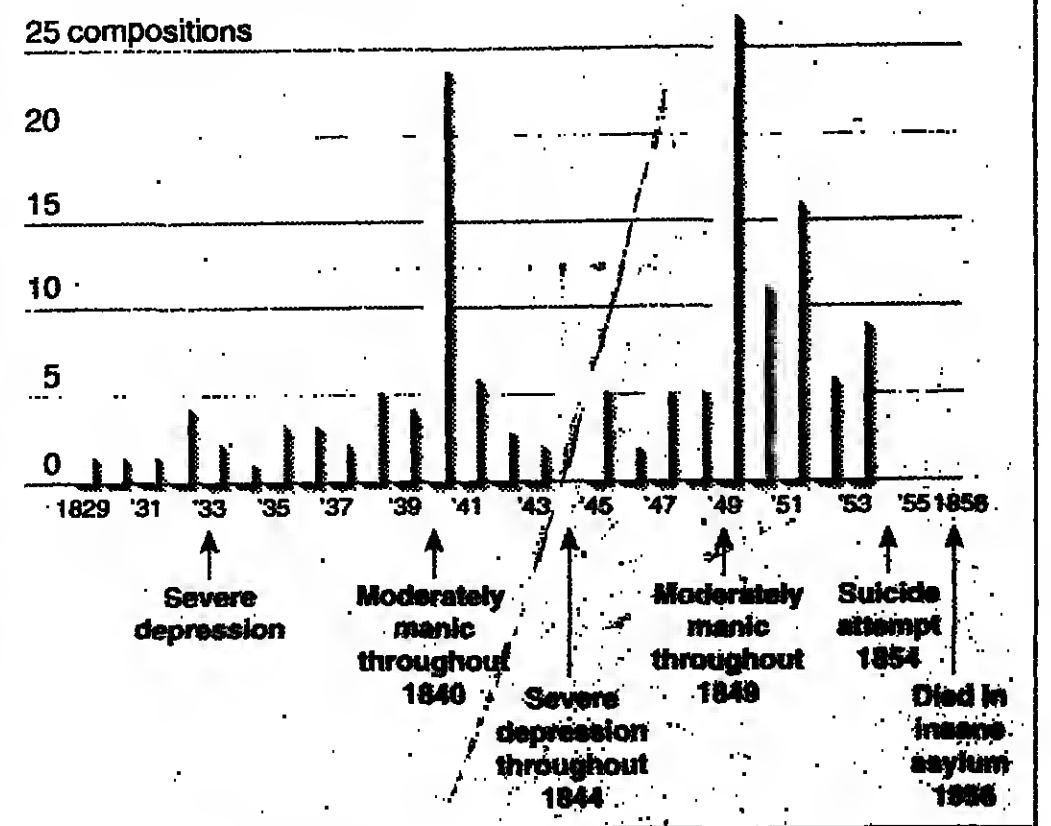
"Before my injury, I wasn't inclined to be a reader, or obsessed with God and the meaning of life," he said. "Ever since this happened to me, I've been a more introspective guy, constantly reading philosophy, studying world religions and then having a fever, literally a fever, to write."

"It's a lust, an obsession, to put it down, and in the act of writing I'm not Thom Jones. And it's such a relief to not be Thom Jones."

Some famous, and famously mad, creators may have suffered from both temporal lobe epilepsy and manic depression, including Edgar Allan Poe and Vincent van Gogh. Van Gogh's blend of mental agony and creative passion was so profound that despair finally drove him at the age of 37 to shoot himself in the chest, and died of his wound two days later.

### Mapping Madness and Genius

The quantity, if not the quality, of the composer Robert Schumann's output varied strikingly with episodes of depression or mania and the relatively benign periods between. He lived from 1810 to 1856, when he died of self-starvation.



### Jordan, PLO sign economic accord

(Continued from page 1)

was the number one priority in the economic pact signed on Friday. A joint technical committee will be established to supervise the reopening of Jordanian bank branches in the occupied territories, and to coordinate monetary and financial policies in Palestine and to agree on policies of investment, Dr. Anani said.

He said that around 300 million dinars, almost one fourth of dinars issued by the Central Bank, were in circulation in the occupied territories and it was the duty of the joint technical committee to supervise the stability of currency in the territories.

However, the previous draft stipulated that the CBJ was the party authorised, in a joint manner between the two sides, to reorganise the reopening of Jordanian bank branches which were closed in 1967 by the occupying authorities.

Mr. Nashashibi said a Palestinian central bank was not established yet, and the setting up of one was being considered and studied by the PLO, therefore there would be no role, during the interim period, for such a central bank in the monetary and financial affairs in the occupied territories.

He said the Jordanian dinar would be the tender used in the Palestinian territories. However, the agreement allowed for the use of other Arab international currencies according to the economic benefit and interests of the Palestinian economy and in complete coordination with the CBJ. The previous draft stipulated that the Jordanian dinar would continue to be the only legal tender in Palestine throughout the interim period.

Dr. Anani explained that this issue was agreed because it took into consideration realities on the ground in the occupied territories. "We must take into consideration the fact that other currencies are currently in use in the occupied territories, such as the dollar and the Egyptian pound used in Gaza Strip, but the Jordanian dinar remains the major tender," he explained.

Dr. Anani said bank branches would open in the West Bank very soon, as soon as technical matters were finished.

In terms of priority, he said that banking and reopening of bank branches in the West Bank is the thing we can immediately embark upon," Dr. Anani said. In the banking sector, he said, both sides agreed to study and cooperate in the field of specialised credit institutions.

Mr. Nashashibi said both sides also agreed that Jordan

and the "liberated Palestinian territories" would act as one market and trade between them would be considered internal trade.

"The accord has set joint objectives in developing free trade and free movement of persons, goods, and capital," the PLO official said.

The second priority, according to Dr. Anani, is trade. He said the volume of trade between Palestine and Jordan was left open, contrary to the previous draft which specified that the volume of trade between the two sides would be no less than \$300 million in the first year, to be increased during the next two years.

"Concerning the trade issue, which will be pressing upon us very soon, unfortunately we cannot do things our own way. We have to remember there is still an occupier and we have to unify our positions in order to confront the Israeli designs to divert trade between us in favour of the Israeli economy. This is the gist of what we have agreed upon," Dr. Anani said.

Dr. Anani said both sides have agreed to deal with priorities and to activate the joint committees which should be meeting very soon, probably next week. He said the economic pact would be submitted to the Cabinet for approval today.

Dr. Anani said the only guarantee for implementing the pact "is the fact that we have no other alternative."

He said the "seriousness with which we dealt with this issue, the haggling over every specific term that was used in it reflected our belief in serious intentions on both sides to put it into implementation was a guarantee."

He added that the question of guarantees whether the agreement would be honoured was not a "valid question. There are no such things as guarantees because we emanated from our deep conviction that our interests are interrelated and must be coordinated and streamlined and we did not adopt anything that was not in line with the interests of both Palestinian and Jordanian people."

Mr. Nashashibi said: "One important guarantee was our political will, and our decisions are our genuine interest. These determine the real guarantees. We signed it by our free will."

Dr. Anani said the agreement would prevent any future misunderstandings between Jordan and the Palestinians. He noted that after reported Israeli withdrawal from the Gaza Strip and Jericho and the PLO assumes power in these territories, Jordan would be ready to cooperate in line with specified and agreed steps

mentioned in the economic pact.

However, some PLO officials in Tunis said that Mr. Kaddumi arrived to Jordan to coordinate on future relations and to activate the joint committees, rather than sign the economic pact. They said during the first meeting on Wednesday, Jordanian officials had insisted on the need to sign the agreement or else face further deterioration of Palestinian-Jordanian relations because Jordan was not prepared to wait forever until the PLO was ready to sign.

One PLO official said that Mr. Kaddumi came to Amman authorised by the PLO's Executive Committee to reach accords with Jordan, but was trying to win time because Mr. Arafat's wish was to wait until the PLO-Israeli negotiations on withdrawal from the Gaza Strip and Jericho were finalised. Jordanian officials, angered by what they saw as the PLO's lack of seriousness, pushed for signing the accord. Mr. Arafat was in direct contact with Mr. Kaddumi and the Jordanians, directing his delegation and requesting amendments which led to his approval for signing the agreement, officials said.

Dr. Anani told reporters that King Hussein's directives and his insistence on continuous and practical coordination were welcomed by the organisation.

"We think the pact is ready for implementation, and we have big challenges ahead of us, we are pleased with the achievement of this economic accord and with the fact that Palestinian President Yasser Arafat was in direct consultation with us during the meetings until late hours in the night," Dr. Anani said.

### Mexico revolt: Reminder of region's other rebels

By Andrew Cawthorne Reuter

PANAMA CITY — Mexico's peasant uprising is a reminder that, while the bloody wars characterising Central America in the 1970s and 1980s are over, smaller-scale rebel activity still smoulders throughout the region.

From the poor state of Chiapas on the Mexico-Guatemala border where Indians launched their new year's day insurrection, to the jungle regions of southeastern Panama controlled by Colombian guerrillas, armed revolutionary hands are a persistent annoyance if not a serious threat to Central America's elected rulers.

"The great social explosions of the 1970s and 1980s have burnt themselves out, but there are other sources of energy now, albeit smaller, which keep the revolutionary fires burning sporadically," said Marco Gandasegui, of the Panama-based Centre for Latin American Studies.

"What the Chiapas revolt — and last year's events in Guatemala and Nicaragua — show is that where governments fail to resolve social problems, people are still prepared to take up arms as the only solution left to them," Mr. Gandasegui added.

In Guatemala, up to 800 leftist rebels from the Guatemalan National Revolutionary Unity (URNG) are still fighting a 33-year-old war which has claimed at least 100,000 lives. The heavy fighting of the 1980s, however, has turned to sporadic terrorist attacks on the URNG in rural areas.

In Nicaragua, as many as 2,000 former combatants from both sides of the 1980s civil war

took up arms last year against the government of President Violeta Chamorro. An army offensive and government amnesty largely neutralised the threat, but armed bands still operate in the countryside.

El Salvador's Farabundo Martí Liberation Front (FMLF), which fought a 12-year-long war against the government, is now an official political party, but in recent weeks the Salvador and Guatemalan governments have said that FMLF elements may be shipping arms to the URNG.

The FMLF has vehemently denied the accusations, but it admitted the existence of secret arms caches last year after several were found in El Salvador, Nicaragua and Honduras.

Even Panama — which remained relatively peaceful while wars came and went elsewhere in the region — has its problems.

Leftist Colombian rebels reportedly control large areas of Panama's Darien jungle for use in drug trafficking and as a launchpad for guerrilla activity in Colombia.

At the other end of the country, a small band of soldiers from former dictator Manuel Antonio Noriega's military are believed to be organising terrorist attacks from a hideout in the western highlands near Costa Rica.

Mr. Gandasegui said problems of poverty, unemployment and landlessness were the driving force behind most of the intermittent guerrilla activity in the region.

"While many are forging ahead with industrial development and free trade agreements, others are still struggling to survive and sometimes see revolutionary methods as the only ones left to them," he

said.

The rebel activity of previous decades was aided in part by cold war rivalry as Central America became a flashpoint for the struggle between the United States and its adversaries. The leftists received support from sympathetic countries, but, with the collapse of communism, that support is all but gone.

Indian activist Atencio Lopez warned that, instead of ideology, an increasing militancy among the region's indigenous people may fuel guerrilla activity in the future.

"Indigenous people are no longer prepared to tolerate the disgraceful disregard of their problems," said Mr. Lopez, a

Panamanian Kuna who often represents Latin American Indians at international forums. "What you are seeing today in Chiapas could well happen tomorrow in Costa Rica or Panama if they continue to ignore us."

Indians are believed to make up the bulk of the self-styled Zapatista National Liberation Army whose four-day-old uprising in Chiapas has so far claimed at least 93 lives.

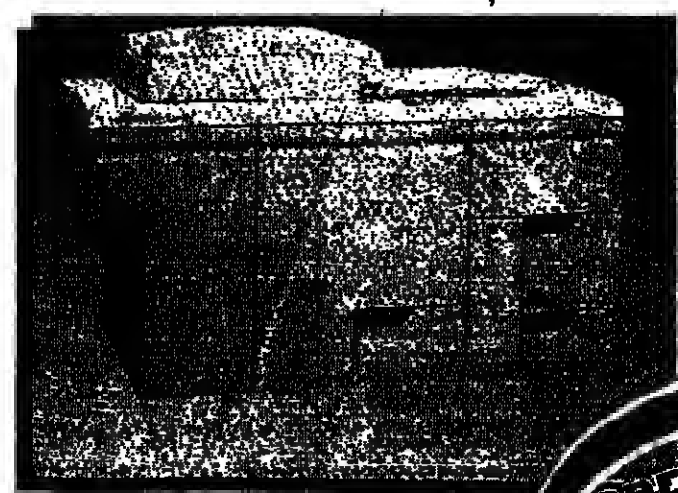
While none of the region's guerrilla movements are officially united, many observers believe they have a sophisticated communications and self-help network.

Officials in Guatemala and Mexico have been quick to say the Chiapas rebels have members from El Salvador and Guatemala, but an official statement from the Mexican government has said there were no indications of URNG involvement.

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## Communists and nationalists forming block against reformists — Gaidar

MOSCOW (Agencies) — Economics Minister Yegor Gaidar said nationalists and Communists in Russia's new parliament appeared to be forging a common front against reformists, five days before the legislature's first session.

Mr. Gaidar told Ekho Moskvy Radio station Thursday night his Russia's Choice bloc, the main reformist grouping in the new State Duma, was pulling out of all-party consultations on the appointment of a speaker.

"In the course of these negotiations, especially in recent days, we have seen the clear emergence of a close coalition of (nationalist) Liberal Democrats, Communists and Agrarians (who are)... imposing their decisions," Mr. Gaidar said.

"We do not want to take part in this," he added.

The prospect of a joint front formed by nationalist Vladimir Zhirinovskiy's Liberal Democrats, Communists and conservative Agrarians has haunted President Boris Yeltsin since Dec. 11 elections.

Mr. Yeltsin had gambled that the new State Duma would prove more sympathetic to his market reforms than the old parliament he abolished on Sept. 21. But the elections showed heavy support for ultra-nationalist Zhirinovskiy and the Communists.

Mr. Gaidar's bloc and other broadly pro-Yeltsin groups, driven by personal rivalries and policy differences, could have serious trouble winning a majority on key legislation.

But Mr. Yeltsin still has cause to hope that enough divides the Communists and ultra-nationalists to prevent them forming a solid anti-government coalition.

His aides are busily courting Communist leaders—something unthinkable before December's elections.

Prime Minister Viktor Chernomyrdin, not allied to any of the blocs, met Communist Party leaders Thursday.

Friday saw a relative lull in political activity, being the Russian Orthodox Christmas Day and a national holiday.

The Duma speaker, subject of this week's consultations, has more limited powers than the head of the old parliament.

For his part in an Oct. 3 uprising against Mr. Yeltsin.

But Mr. Gaidar was clearly concerned about early signs of cooperation.

"We have much work to do to achieve the formation of a coalition strong enough to prevent the Duma becoming an instrument for the destruction of democracy," Mr. Gaidar said.

The Duma and the Federation Council, parliament's upper

chamber, are scheduled to hold their first sitting Tuesday.

Mr. Yeltsin may address deputies of the two chambers before the sittings in an informal joint assembly.

The president's chief spokesman struck an ominous note in comments Thursday when he said opponents should cooperate with reformers or face a harsh reaction from Mr. Yeltsin.

"We know from the events of Oct. 3 and 4 that the hand of the president can be tough and strong," spokesman Vyacheslav Kostikov said.

Meanwhile most Muscovites don't believe the promises of Mr. Zhirinovskiy and don't want him as prime minister, but aren't sure he's a fascist, according to a poll released Friday.

Before Russia's Dec. 12 parliamentary elections, Mr. Zhirinovskiy promised that if his party won power, Russian men would get cheaper vodka, Russian women would get better lingerie, and the whole nation would rise up and rebuild its empire.

Voters responded by casting more ballots for Mr. Zhirinovskiy's misleadingly-named Liberal Democratic Party than for any other party or coalition. But it was not clear whether they really believed Mr. Zhirinovskiy and wanted him in power, or they were just

protesting the painful economic policies — and colourless campaigns of President Yeltsin's supporters.

The poll released Friday by the Mnenie (Opinion) Research Service lends support to the protest vote theory.

Two-thirds of the 1,223 Moscow residents questioned by telephone last week said they did not believe Mr. Zhirinovskiy could fulfill his promises.

Just 10 per cent said they thought he could, and 23 per cent weren't sure.

Most Moscow residents apparently don't think Mr. Zhirinovskiy should hold real power. More than 71 per cent said they would not want him to become prime minister.

Mr. Zhirinovskiy's inflammatory rhetoric frightens some Russians, but delights or amuses others. In a vintage performance Thursday, he called American President Bill Clinton a "coward" and said the U.S. president should stay home and play the saxophone instead of coming to Moscow for a summit meeting.

Mr. Zhirinovskiy also threatened Japan with a blockade, said French and German leaders have been "sucking up" to Mr. Yeltsin, and called the West "rotten and moldy." U.S. officials have said Mr. Clinton will not meet with Mr. Zhirinovskiy during the Jan. 12-15 summit.



A man lifts the blanket covering the 13-year-old boy killed by police gunfire in a Cape Town township (AFP photo)

## PAC to meet police over Cape Town killing

CAPE TOWN (R) — South Africa's Pan Africanist Congress (PAC) Friday condemned the killing of a 13-year-old boy in violence triggered by the arrests of suspects to last week's Cape Town pub killings.

Anglican Archbishop and Nobel Peace Laureate Desmond Tutu angrily condemned the shooting and said in a statement police were going out of their way to harass the PAC.

The boy, Siphiwo Sam, was killed and six people including a six-year-old child were wounded when members of the police Murder and Robbery Squad fired rubber bullets and shotguns in Cape Town's Guguletu township late Thursday.

Police Colonel Raymond Dowd said police felt compelled to fire rubber bullets and shotguns when they came under attack from youths throwing rocks and chanting "war, war."

PAC executive member Patricia De Lille told reporters about 50 armed police raided a PAC elections meeting, detained nine youths and allowed a police dog to bite people in a crowd angered by the arrests.

"All the people were shot in the back as they ran away from police. I don't hear any warning. I just heard shots being fired," she said.

Ms. De Lille said at a news conference later that leaders of

her radical black-supremacist group would meet local police chief General Nic Snyman later in the day to inform him of plans to lay a charge of murder against police.

Col. Dowd confirmed that Sam was shot in the back, but said the raid was part of an investigation into terror attacks in Cape Town last year on a restaurant, a church and a pub, confirmed that Sam was shot in the back.

He said it would be premature to assume that Sam was shot by police during a clash with a crowd protesting the detention of people wanted for questioning in connection with last week's slaughter of three women and a man in the Heidelberg Tavern, a popular student pub.

PAC spokesman Andri Niso-dow said lawyers were preparing charges against police.

"We demand that Colonel (Leonard) Knipe, Major (Des) Segal and Colonel Dowd must be removed from the investigation of the Heidelberg incident," he said.

Arch. Tutu said in his statement police had a right and a duty to investigate "racist crimes such as the Heidelberg massacre."

"But the killing of youngsters last night and during last October's raid on Umhata creates the strong impression that the police are going well beyond the action required... to harass the PAC," he said.

## German coalition splits over presidential candidate

BONN (AFP) — The governing coalition of Chancellor Helmut Kohl is openly divided over who to put forward as candidate for the German presidency, dimming its prospects at the start of a year of crucial regional and national elections.

At a meeting of Bavaria's Christian Social Union, party chief and Finance Minister Theo Waigel announced Thursday that Mr. Kohl had agreed that the president of the Constitutional Court, Roman Herzog, 59, should be their man to lead over from President Richard von Weizsaecker.

But the same day at a party meeting of their own, the Liberal Free Democrats, the minority partner in Mr. Kohl's coalition, decided to stick by its own candidate, Hildegard Hamm-Bruecher, 73.

Mr. Herzog's name had been very cautiously advanced in recent weeks following a debate over Mr. Kohl's own chosen candidate, Steffen Heilmann, who was forced to withdraw over various controversial rightwing statements he had made.

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## Bushfires hit suburban Sydney

SYDNEY (AFP) — Suburban homes blazed and residents tried to flee through choked streets Friday after bushfires which have devastated New South Wales raged into Sydney, the first time in living memory that such an inferno has licked the city.

Four homes in the northern suburb of Roseville were reported to have "exploded," many more there and in neighbouring suburbs fringing the bush were burning and thousands had been evacuated in the swirling firestorm.

No deaths were reported, but ambulance services said 14 people, including a number of firefighters, had been taken to hospital to be treated for smoke inhalation, dehydration and exhaustion.

A college at nearby Kurrajong was on fire, a shopping centre in the suburb of Marsfield 16 kilometres from the city centre was reportedly under threat and the Blue Mountains to the west were blazing.

An enormous cloud of smoke reduced visibility virtually to zero through much of Sydney's north shore, which includes some of its most exclusive suburbs, and traffic was almost at a standstill.

Major roads and northern train services were cut and power supplies were interrupted as fires tore at the city's main arteries.

Weeping residents clung to valued possessions — such as television sets and bicycles — as they fled their homes, but there were no reports of serious casualties by 8 p.m. (2100 GMT).

But exhausted hush fire fighters were still battling Friday night to save thousands more suburban homes here after winds combined with a beatwave to create the disaster.

With temperatures touching 38 degrees Celsius (100 Fahrenheit) in the city and up to 44 C (111F) in the country, the state government warned up to 3,000 homes could be lost within three days if weather conditions did not change.

Emergency Services Minister Terry Griffiths told reporters the state was facing unprecedented catastrophe. "Rarely do I use the word catastrophe but we are almost at catastrophic conditions now," he said.

By mid-afternoon, a 7,000-strong force of firefighters — the entire strength of the New South Wales Volunteer Force, with reinforcements from neighbouring states and defence force personnel — were battling 130 major fires raging out of control throughout the state.

Arsonists are blamed for causing most of the fires, which have already claimed three lives amid a trail of devastation.

Firemen had no hope of controlling the fires and could do little more than try to save lives and property. Bush Fire Service spokesman Danny Moroney said.

The disaster in the northern suburbs occurred after a major fire in the state's central coast region crossed the Hawkesbury River system north of Sydney and raged here.

It linked up with another fire in Sydney's Lane Cove National Park which started Thursday and flared again Friday, forcing evacuation of several streets in Marsfield and threatening others in Pymble and Turramurra.

## Hollywood madam names some names

NEW YORK (AFP) — Hollywood madam Heidi Fleiss named actor Charlie Sheen and producer Jon Peters as free-spending clients and said TV actress Shannen Doherty once tried to hire prostitutes for a fiancée's bachelor party.

Sheen liked to have a blonde dress up as a cheerleader and pretend she had a big game the next day, Fleiss told Vanity Fair, adding that the actor was a gentleman who liked to hire call girls whenever he had his friends over. "He'd pay for all his friends," she said. "They want to be studs. They don't want to say they pay for sex."

A woman who answered the phone at Sheen's publicist said the actor would have no comment on the report, which appeared in the magazine's February edition.

The magazine said Ms. Fleiss, who has pleaded innocent to five counts of pandering and one count of possessing cocaine for sale, charged rates that started at \$1,500 for the night, Peters, the former co-chief executive of Sony Pictures, "was the guy everyone went to when they wanted a girl," Ms. Fleiss said.

"He got girls for everyone," Peters could not be reached for comment. Ms. Fleiss said Ms. Doherty, star of the hit U.S. television series Beverly Hills, 90210, called to say she wanted girls who were "pretty" — but not too pretty for her fiancée's party. "She was giving me all these orders and then she said, 'I only want to pay \$200 apiece.' I said, 'why don't you do it yourself?' and I hung up on her."

Stan Rosenfield, Doherty's publicist, said the actress talked to one of Ms. Fleiss's associates, not Ms. Fleiss. "But it wasn't for prostitution," he said. "She wanted the girls to jump out of a cake or something." Doherty married Ashley Hamilton last year, but it was not clear if the party was for him.

## No coup this year — Thai army astrologer

BANGKOK (R) — The Thai army's astrologer has predicted that the South East Asian country's military will not stage a coup d'état in 1994. He has also used his crystal ball to tell readers of his astrological column that senior officers will be misunderstood by the media but will get along with the current government and will be visited by a lot of friends.

Lieutenant-Colonel Thadthiam Yiamnakhon's stargazing, carried in the monthly army news, was quoted in the Nation newspaper Friday. Col. Thadthiam also predicted Thailand would not be drawn into war this year despite continuing disturbances along its borders with Laos, Burma and Cambodia. Coups are a regular feature in Thai politics, with 18 staged successfully since Thailand became a constitutional monarchy in 1932. The last was in February, 1991. Although there will be no coup d'état this year, unknown persons will secretly try to involve the military in politics, Col. Thadthiam foretold.

## Woman shot while watching film

SAN DIEGO Calif. (R) — A 40-year-old woman watching the Holocaust epic Schindler's List in a crowded movie theatre was shot in the back and seriously injured, police said. Moviegoers fled in panic when the shot rang out, and the gunman escaped and was being sought, said Lieutenant Bill Mabeu, a San Diego police spokesman. Investigators had no suspect or motive for the shooting. The woman was rushed to the University of California at San Diego Medical Centre and was listed in serious condition after undergoing emergency surgery, police said. Police declined to speculate whether the content of the movie had anything to do with the shooting. Schindler's List — a film directed by Steven Spielberg, tells the story of a German industrialist who saved the lives of more than 1,500 people during World War II. The unidentified woman and her husband, an off-duty police officer from the neighbouring city of La Mesa, were attending a matinee at the Horton Plaza Theatre in San Diego when she was shot by a man sitting directly behind her, police said. Witnesses said the shot fired in the cinema coincided with one of the characters was shot. The real shot and the fictitious shot were fired almost simultaneously, the witnesses said. A semi-automatic handgun was found on the floor behind the woman's seat, said police Lieutenant Dave Cohen.

## Seoul sees no quick end to nuclear row

SEOUL (R) — North Korea's willingness to allow nuclear inspection could prove a turning point in efforts to end a long-running dispute over its suspected atomic arms programme, South Korean officials said.

But doubts persist in Seoul whether the exclusive Communist state will move quickly to remove suspicions over its programme and return to the negotiating table with South Korea to promote peace on the divided Korean peninsula.

"The North's agreement to allow nuclear inspections is a promising sign that a peaceful solution of the thorny issue may be possible," said Cho Myung-Jae, a Foreign Ministry official.

"But it is just one of many steps the North must take to completely resolve the nuclear issue...and we should not be overly optimistic," said Mr. Cho.

"The North is so unpredictable and it is really difficult to get the nuclear row will be settled fairly soon," he added.

Efforts to persuade the North to allow fears about its suspected development of an atomic arsenal fail, it could be slapped with international sanctions, U.S. and South Korean officials have said.

This could further increase tensions on the peninsula, site of the world's last cold war frontier, where the United States, China, Russia, and Japan all have strategic long-term interests.

A North Korea watcher in Seoul said the North may resort to delaying tactics in future negotiations with the United States, the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) and South Korea in a play to continue a bomb-building programme.

"It is premature to say a deal (between North Korea and United States) over nuclear row," he said.

Undersecretary of State Lynn Davis, briefing reporters at the State Department, said Wednesday the North had agreed in negotiations with the United States to allow inspections of seven declared nuclear sites.

The comments by Mr. Davis, the department's top policymaker on non-proliferation matters, were the first on-the-record confirmation from the United States of any agreement.

But the accord sidesteps a more crucial matter — IAEA access to undeclared sites, especially two nuclear waste dumps that could shed crucial light on whether North Korea has produced nuclear weapons.

In Tokyo, Prime Minister Morihito Hosokawa and U.S. Senator Sam Nunn agreed Friday that Tokyo and Washington should both cooperate with Seoul to address North Korea's suspected development of nuclear arms, officials said.

## NEWS IN BRIEF

### Clinton arrives for mother's rites

HOT SPRINGS, Arkansas (R) — A bereaved President Bill Clinton flew home to Arkansas Thursday to make funeral arrangements for his mother, Virginia Kelley, who died in her sleep early Thursday at 70. The cause of death was complications from breast cancer, the Garland County coroner said. Mrs. Kelley, who battled breast cancer several years ago, recently told friends the malignancy had returned. She died at her lakeside home in Hot Springs, where she lived with her fourth husband, Dick, a retired food executive. Mr. Clinton, who travelled alone from Washington, arrived in this small Arkansas resort town Thursday afternoon and went directly to his mother's modest one-storey home. Hillary Rodham Clinton and their 13-year-old daughter Chelsea were to join the president Friday. As Mr. Clinton left the White House, the first lady walked arm-in-arm with him to a helicopter waiting on the South Lawn, and in a show of affection rarely seen publicly, saw her husband off with a hug and a kiss. White House spokeswoman Dee Dee Myers said Mr. Clinton's stepfather phoned him shortly before 2:30 a.m. EST (2730 GMT) to tell him of his mother's death, and that the news had come as a shock.

### Mexican army launches new offensive

SAN CRISTOBAL DE LAS CASAS, Mexico (AP) — The military fired rockets into the mountains and set up mortars in a city square in a new offensive against Indian rebels in southern Mexico. The Indians surprised the government with their New Year's Day rebellion in Chiapas, a poor, predominantly Mayan region. The rebels said they were fighting for socialism and to improve the lot of Indians who lack food, education, housing and potable water. The revolt also has surprised ordinary Mexicans, accustomed to guerrillas at home, and rattled other Central American countries, many of which are just emerging from years of civil wars. President Carlos Salinas De Gortari, speaking in a nationally broadcast address Thursday, deplored the army's actions, while also taking steps to build support for the government in the poverty-stricken region. The government flew in 20 tonnes of rice, beans, powdered milk and other foods Thursday to Chiapas, and promised to beef up programmes for building roads, schools and hospitals.

### Spy scandal linked to Italian president

ROME (R) — Italian Interior Minister Nicola Mancino said Friday that press allegations linking President Oscar Luigi Scalfaro to a scandal over secret service funds were an attempt to delay landmark general elections. "This story is nothing other than a shameful attempt to get at the head of state... and delay the elections," Mr. Mancino said in an interview published in the newspaper La Repubblica. Arrested former spy Maurizio Broccolotti alleged Tuesday that Mr. Scalfaro and Mr. Mancino were involved in trying to hush up a scandal over alleged embezzlement from an annual \$35 million fund held by the SISDE civilian secret service. The scandal, which first erupted late last year, has resurfaced as Scalfaro prepares to dissolve Italy's scandal-ridden parliament and set a date for general elections. Opposition parties called this week in talks with Prime Minister Carlo Azeglio Ciampi for the elections, under a new first-past-the-post system, to be held in late March or April. The country's discredited former coalition partners, eager for time to regroup, want the polls to be held in June.

### Man seriously wounded in Belfast

BELFAST (R) — Protestant extremists shot and seriously wounded a Catholic man in Belfast Thursday night after abandoning an attack on another person, police said. Police initially thought the three gunmen from the outlawed Ulster Freedom Fighters (UFF), who oppose Irish Republican guerrillas fighting British rule, had wounded two people in separate attacks. The man was shot in the arm and back at his home in the Lenadoon area of West Belfast, a police spokesman said. The house was taken over by the UFF gunmen. The UFF claimed responsibility for the attack but it was not clear why it abandoned the attack on the other person. The shooting was the latest violent incident in the battle-scarred province where Irish Republican guerrillas have waged a 25-year campaign to end British rule and reunite Northern Ireland with the Irish Republic to the south.

### Russia plane crash killed 125

MOSCOW (AFP) — The crash of a Tupolev 154 airliner near the Siberian city of Irkutsk Monday claimed 125 lives instead of 120 as earlier reported, ITAR-TASS News Agency reported Friday. The agency quoted the independent television station NTV as saying the previous toll — 111 passengers and nine crew — did not take into account four persons whose names did not appear on the passengers' list and a man who died when the plane crashed onto his farm. There are frequent cases of passengers making under-the-table payments for their air fares on Russian internal flights. A commission looking into Monday's crash, one of Russia's worst aviation disasters, was to submit its preliminary findings on Jan. 15, ITAR-TASS said.

## Shooting echoes through togo's capital

LOME (R) — Sporadic shooting echoed through the deserted streets of Togo's capital Friday morning after the government said its forces came under fire at the main border crossing with Ghana during the night.

Lome residents said heavy machinegun and rocket fire died down around 3 a.m. and resumed briefly about five hours later.

The government urged people to stay at home and the sandy streets of the seafaring capital were empty.

Troops made house-to-house searches for the remnants a force of more than 100 armed men the government said crossed from Ghana Wednesday night to assassinate military President Ghasinshe Eyadema.

The government said at least 40 people had been killed. There was no word of casualties from Thursday night's clashes.

Regional carrier Air Afrique said it had cancelled all flights to Lome. The airport was not officially closed but there was no traffic and workers stayed home.

A police statement broadcast by radio Lome said private cars were banned. Only security forces, emergency services, diplomats and journalists were allowed to travel and they would have to submit to inspections at roadblocks.

"Courage, courage and more courage, that's what we wish you this morning," said a Radio Lome announcer.

## Sting, Billy Joel lead list of Grammy nominees

NEW YORK (R) — Mainstream recording stars Sting and Billy Joel led the pack in Grammy award nominations, with each garnering nominations for album, record and song of the year.

Sting earned a total of six nominations and Joel, with four.

The 36th annual awards ceremony by the National Academy of Recording Arts and Sciences will be held at New York's Radio City Music Hall on March 1.

Sting and Joel led an eclectic list of nominees for major awards that included Neil Young, R.E.M., Meat Loaf, the theme from Aladdin, and Whitney Houston's theme album to The Bodyguard in the music industry's most prestigious awards.

Sting was also nominated for Best Music Video — Long Form. Best Male Pop Vocal Performance and Best Solo Rock Vocal Performance Categories, competing with Joel in the Pop Vocal Performance category.

The 8,000 voting members of the academy chose Billy, Blind Melon and Digable Planets. Toni Braxton and Sisters With Voices as the nominees for the year's Best New Artist.

Country music produced a grab-bag of nominees with no clear leaders. Nominated for Best Male Country Vocal were Garth Brooks, Alan Jackson, George Jones, Aaron Neville and Dwight Yoakum, while female country vocal nominees were Mary Chapin Carpenter, Emmylou Harris, Tanya Tucker, Wynonna and Trisha Yearwood.

Rappers Dr Dre, Snoop Doggy Dogg, Arrested Development, Cypress Hill and Naughty By Nature earned nominations in the Best Rap Performance by a duo or group. Unlike past years, no rap or hip hop hits led to a nomination for record, album or song of the year.

Janet Jackson earned nominations for Best Rhythm and Blues Song and Best Female Rhythm and Blues Vocal Performance. Her embattled brother Michael was nowhere to be seen on the list of nominees.

For Album of the Year, Joel was nominated for River Of Dreams, and Sting received the nomination for his Ten Summoner's Tales.

The other nominees in the category were Kamakirid by Donald Fagen, formerly one half of Steely Dan, R.E.M.'s Automatic For The People and The Bodyguard soundtrack, sung by the film's co-star, Whitney Houston.

While Houston's nomination was predictable, the choice of R.E.M. and Fagen showed that academy voters do not rely only on commercial success as a gauge of Grammy worth.

"I think it has been gratifying that the academy is mindful of not just commercial considerations but also artistic ones," said Clive Davis, president and founder of Arista Records, Houston's label.

It's an incredibly diverse marketplace," another recording industry executive said.

At Sting's label, AM Records, Executive Vice President Wayne Isaac said he was surprised at the range of musical styles that surfaced in the nominations.

"I think in general, the Grammys have never been the most cutting edge reflection of what's happening in the music business," he said.

Nominations for Best Song Of The Year, given to the songwriter, were Sting for If I Ever Lose My Faith In You, Joel for The River Of Dreams, Neil Young's Harvest Moon and I'd Do Anything For Love (But I Won't Do That), performed by Meat Loaf and written by Jim Steinman and the theme from the movie Aladdin. A Whole New World, written by Alan Menken and Tim Rice.

For Record of the Year, which is for singles, the nominees were A Whole New World from Aladdin, Joel's The River Of Dreams, Sting's If I Ever Lose My Faith In You, Young's Harvest Moon and Houston's I Will Always Love You.

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## Wiberg seeks to overtake Nachter in World Cup

LITENMARKT, Austria (R) — Swede Pernilla Wiberg will overtake Anita Nachter to lead the overall World Cup lead in the first time this season if she keeps up her superb recent form in two Alpine ski races this weekend.

Wiberg, the defending champion, has seen her lead actually eroded since she ended the season in stunning style with two wins and three second places in the first six events.

Wiberg is now only 16 points behind the Austrian rival in the standings thanks to her win in Morzine Thursday when Nachter finished only 12th, her worst slalom placing of the season.

Altenmark is hosting a slalom and a super-giant slalom, both events at which Wiberg excels.

The 23-year-old Swede took super-G gold at the 1988 Calgary Olympics and leads this season's slalom standings after 10 wins and one second place. Wiberg's perfect run-up to the 1993 Lillehammer Olympics, where she will defend the giant slalom title, produced a sharp contrast with last season when she missed much of the action because of an Achilles tendon injury.

If the Swede should miss her races this weekend, Nachter could still find herself under threat from another quarter, German Swiss Vreni Schneider, who took second place in Morzine and has won two other slalom races this season.

Technical specialist Schneider, who has 46 World Cup wins in a 10-year career, lies in third place in the overall standings with 598 points, against Wach-

ter's 646. Though Schneider is not at her happiest in the super-G, victory in the slalom on the piste where she won in 1988 could allow her to take the lead.

Wachter will also have to watch out for Italy's Deborah Compagnoni, the Olympic super-G gold medalist, who has already won three giant slalom races this season and who lies fourth overall with 474 points.

With just over a month to go to Lillehammer, many other top skiers who have yet to win this season will find themselves under pressure to do well.

They include Germany's Katja Seizinger, who saw her hopes of winning the overall World Cup snatched from her by Wachter in the final race of last season.

Seizinger, super-G world champion last year, has been below par this season although she managed a third place in the Flachau super-giant and second in the Tignes downhill in December.

France's Carole Merle, 1993 giant slalom world champion and silver medalist in the super-G at the last Olympics, has also been fighting to regain her form.

Her best result this season has been third in the opening giant slalom and in the only previous super-G, in Flachau last month, she finished only 39th.

Another disappointment, 25th place in Wednesday's giant slalom in Morzine, prompted the announcement that she had parted company with her trainer and might drop out of the Olympics.

## Kosir seeking to upset names on home slope

RANJSKA GORA, Slovenia (R) — Slovenia rising star Jure Kosir wants to build his best season so far by winning a home crowd with a victory in the Alpine Skiing World Cup double final Saturday and Sunday.

But competition in the first event in Slovenia this season will be stiff with Italian showman Alberto Tomba hungry for points to improve on his third position in the overall World Cup standings.

The slalom and giant slalom races on the demanding Vintgar Slope are expected to attract thousands of Slovenes to the picturesque resort of Ranjska Gora and crowds of alians from across the border set a few kilometres away.

Kosir clinched Slovenia's first victory since independence in Yugoslavia in 1991 with a slalom win at Madonna di Campiglio in Italy last month, just edging out his idol and triple Olympic champion

on a 0.09 of a second. The 21-year-old from the village of Mojstrana secured second place in a slalom in Park City in the United States in November and third place in the same event in Canada a week later.

Master technician Tomba, who has two slalom victories under his belt this season, will be seeking revenge for the Madonna upset.

He will also be hoping to beat closest rivals Kjetil Andre Aamodt of Norway, Austria's Guenther Mader and five-times overall World Cup winner, Marc Girardell, of Luxembourg.

"Fifty-one points separate Tomba from current overall world cup leader Aamodt, who has 505 points, mader is second with 493 and Girardell fourth with 401.

The weekend's races are important for slalom and giant slalom world champion Aamodt who has yet to win an event this season.

"I'm not skiing to get into the top three places. I want to win," the Norwegian all-rounder, told reporters after Thursday's downhill in Saalbach, Austria.

His best result so far this season is second place in a super-G at Val d'Isere in France.

Victory on the steep, icy Slovene slope would boost his momentum in the run-up to the Winter Olympics in Lillehammer next month.

## Czechs seal victory in Hopman Cup

PERTH, Australia (AFP) — The top seeded Czech Republic took less than three hours here Friday night to overwhelm Germany in the final of the Hopman Cup tennis mixed teams' tournament.

Jana Novotna, ranked sixth in the world, and Petr Korda, ranked 12th, were too strong for the unseeded Anke Huber and Bernd Karbacher. The winners shared a cheque of 200,000 Australian dollars (\$141,000) and the losers (\$100,000).

The writing was on the wall for Germany, the titleholders, when Novotna recovered from a disastrous start to beat 10th-ranked Huber, 1-6, 6-4, 6-3 in the women's singles.

Lanky left-hander Korda wrapped up the match when he overpowered Karbacher in straight sets, 6-3, 6-4.

However, Huber and Karbacher won the "dead" mixed doubles rubber 8-3 to regain a degree of pride for Germany.

Korda, who won the Grand Slam Cup in Munich last month, was in devastating form, winning his match in only 67 minutes.

He compared the win here with his triumph in Munich, saying: "There I was playing up because I was against men above me in the rankings."

"Here I was playing down, and there was pressure on me. I was happy with the way I handled it."

Karbacher said: "Sometimes I felt a little bit like a spectator on the court. He was hitting forehand and backhand winners and I did not know what to do."

Maleeva, Davenport reach Australian hardcourt semis

BRISBANE, Australia (AFP) — Rising young stars Magdalena Maleeva and Lindsay Davenport advanced to the semifinals of the Australian Women's Hardcourt Tennis Championships Friday.

Maleeva, the top seeded Bulgarian, reached the semifinals of the Brisbane tournament for the third straight year with a 6-2, 7-5 win over Australian Rachel McQuillan.

Maleeva, 18, will face Argentina's Florencia Labat in Saturday's semifinals after Labat ended Australian interest in the tournament with a 7-6 (9/7), 6-4 victory over Michelle Jaggard-Lai.

Labat, ranked 51 in the world, has been one of the few players who have coped in the heatwave conditions.

In the first quarterfinal, Taipei's Shi-Ting Wang upset third-seeded Ukrainian Natalia Medvedeva 6-1, 3-6, 6-2 to reach the semifinals for the second straight year.

Wang will face the tournament's second seed, American Lindsay Davenport, who ousted Germany's Barbara Rittner 6-4, 6-0.

Seles to miss Australian Open

CLEVELAND, Ohio (Agencies) — Tennis star Monica Seles will miss the Australian Open while she continues to recuperate from a stab wound, the former world number one said Thursday in a brief statement released by her managers.

"It is extremely difficult for me to miss another Grand Slam Tournament, but I won't be ready to play in the Australian Open this year," Seles, a three-time Australian Open champion, said through her agent at International Management Group (IMG).

The Australian Open, won by Seles the past three years, will be the fourth consecutive Grand Slam tournament she has been forced to miss.

Seles has been sidelined since she was stabbed in the back by a spectator during a match in Hamburg, Germany on April 30 of last year.

The 20-year-old Seles, who was the top player in the world at the time of the attack, said in a recent television interview that she owed it to her fans and to herself to return only when she was ready to play competitively again.

"People deserve to see me at my best," she said last month. The Australian Open, the year's first Grand Slam event, begins on Jan. 17.

Seles is undergoing an aggressive rehabilitation and training programme, but it is still too soon to determine when she will return to the professional women's tennis circuit, the IMG statement said.

The statement from Seles comes on the day that U.S. figure skating champion Nancy Kerrigan was attacked by a spectator following a practice session for this week's national championships in Detroit.

A spokeswoman for Seles at IMG said the tennis star's decision to pass up the Australian Open was not related to the frightening attack on Kerrigan.

The absence of Seles leaves the Australian Open without three of the biggest drawcards in women's tennis.

Martina Navratilova no longer plays the Australian Open, saying it falls too early in the

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## Kerrigan attacked at U.S. figure skating Championships.

DETROIT (R) — U.S. figure skating champion Nancy Kerrigan was attacked by a man who bludgeoned her leg with a blunt instrument, following a practice session for the National Championships Thursday, but she said it could have been a lot worse.

Kerrigan is considered a gold medal favourite for next month's Winter Olympics in Lillehammer, Norway, but the attack could jeopardise her chances of qualifying for the U.S. Olympic team.

The 1992 Olympic bronze medalist was treated in hospital for a deep bruise of the right knee and released after the incident that recalled last year's attack on tennis star Monica Seles, who was stabbed during a match in Germany.

The 24-year-old Kerrigan had just finished a 40-minute practice session and was walking to the locker room to change clothes when an unidentified man lunged at her from behind a curtain and struck her across the right, kneecap.

The assailant escaped through a window and has not been apprehended, police said. "I don't want to lose faith in people," said an obviously shaken Kerrigan in a television interview from her hotel room on Thursday night.

"That was one bad guy. I'm sure there's other because this kind of thing has happened before in other sports," Kerrigan said, referring to the attack on Seles last April by a knife-wielding spectator.

"But not everybody is like that," she continued. "Most people are worried about me and wondering what happened

and those are the people that I want to tell that I'm okay."

"It's not the most important thing, so if I can't I'll have to deal with it, but I'm okay and it could have been a lot worse."

Kerrigan, heavily favoured to repeat as U.S. champion, was scheduled to compete in Thursday's technical programme of the national Championships which have as the Olympic trials for the U.S. team.

She was planning to try to practise Friday morning and hoped to be able to compete Friday night. The women's final free programme is scheduled for Saturday night.

Kerrigan was hysterical and screaming as she was carried from the scene of the assault by her father, Dan Kerrigan.

"Why me, why now?" Kerrigan said. "Someone help me... help me. Get my skates off. Why, why, why. I'm so scared, it hurts."

Said her father: "This was senseless... just senseless."

Kerrigan's coach, Evy Scott, did not see the attack but said he heard her screaming.

"She was wacked with a crowbar by a big guy," Scott told reporters. "He didn't go for the head, she'll be fine, she'll be all right."

Scott was critical of the lack of security at the arena. "There was no security," he said. "It wasn't a skating injury, that I could accept... This was a felonious assault."

"She is really trying to be optimistic and stoic but initially she was terrified," Scott said.

"She has to understand that she is a visible person and that the rest of her visible life she'll need protection."

The International Skating Union eliminating the theatrics of routines like Bolero and the poor imitations that followed.

"We went a certain way (with Bolero) in 1984, and certain people took up the gauntlet from there and went with it. I think they (the ISU) were trying to bring it back into a certain form," Dean said. "It's challenged us to work within rules and within restrictions and at the same time still try to be entertaining, fresh, challenging."

Torvill and Dean know they are putting at risk their reputation as the best ice dance couple of all time.

"The judges will judge us remembering what we were in the 1984," Dean said. "And having left on such a high, now you come back to the reality. It was very glamorous then, and we've got to try to come back and create that glamour again."

"We're taking a risk coming back," Torvill said during a break in practice Thursday at the Sheffield Arena. "But we couldn't ignore the challenge."

Torvill and Dean are among a group of skaters taking advantage of a new rule allow-

ing professionals to regain Olympic eligibility in time for the games in Lillehammer, Norway, next month.

With victory at the British Championships considered a formality, the first real challenge for Torvill, 36, and Dean, 35, in their comeback will be the European Championships, later this month, followed by the Olympics. At both competitions, they will be, at best, co-favourites next to reigning world champions Maya Usova and Alexander Zhulin of Russia.

Dean acknowledged his anxiety over the thought of losing.

"It's a knife-edge thing. Isn't it," he said. "That's the adrenalin of being accountable again, putting yourself on the line again."

The pair's coach, Betty Callaway, is more confident, noting that 10 years of tours and shows have produced a better Torvill and Dean.

"They are very much better, not only more polished, more sophisticated, more mature, but also their technical skating is much, much better than in 1984."

## Torvill and Dean unveil new figure skating routine

SHEFFIELD, England (AP) — The secret is out. Jayne Torvill and Christopher Dean have turned to the romantic ballroom days of Fred Astaire and Ginger Rogers for the inspiration for their Olympic comeback.

The pair Thursday unveiled a masterfully flowing routine with a big time ballroom feel, a showy and romantic performance to the Irving Berlin song Let's Face The Music And Dance.

The first judgment of their new routine will be passed Saturday night during the free dance portion of the British Ice Dance Championships.

The four-time world champions have the lofty task of bettering Bolero, a revolutionary piece that won them an unprecedented string of perfect 6.08 and the gold medal at the 1984 Olympics.

"It's sort of back to social dancing, and what we tried to incorporate is all the rhythms that you would most probably see in the ballroom," said Dean, who choreographs the couple's routines. "The rhythms that we go through are the fox trot, waltz, tango with a

little bit of a surprise in there — and then into a big swing-time quick-step."

"But having set all those rhythms, we didn't want to make it like it's a ballroom sequence. It's very much a piece of its own."

One of the surprises is a two-step shuffle down the centre of the ice, almost a Michael Jackson moonwalk in reverse.

"The amount of steps in this could be fitted within the first minute of Bolero. It's formal, compact," Dean said. "It's difficult for us to do."

The routine invites comparison to Astaire and Rogers, who performed to the same music in the 1936 movie Follow The Fleet.

But the two skaters reject any implication that theirs is simply an Astaire-Rogers routine on ice.

"We like them," Dean said. "But we're not trying to be them."

The music was specially arranged note-by-note according to Dean's instructions and recorded by 45 musicians in a studio over three days. The ballroom sound was necessitated by new rules drawn up by

Dr. Steven Plomaris, who examined Kerrigan, said there was no fracture, but the skater "suffered a direct blow to the kneecap. She has a bruised patella, quadriceps tendon and tissue. There is swelling and black and blue bruises."

After being treated Kerrigan returned to her hotel under tight security. She was able to walk, but was limping.

The assailant was identified as a 6-foot-2 (1.88m), white male. He had been seen videotaping Kerrigan's work-out close to the rink railing.

If Kerrigan does not complete, and finish among the top two at the U.S. Nationals, she may not be allowed to join the Olympic team, however U.S. figure skating officials said they may petition the U.S. Olympic Committee for a special waiver to allow her to compete based on her showing at the 1992 games.

Meanwhile, Jenni Meno and Todd Sand the favourites in pairs at the U.S. Figure Skating Championships won the technical programme Thursday.

Meno and Sand, who competed in the 1992 Olympics with different partners and got together in late 1992, skated crisply in an upbeat ahead of Kyoko Ina and Jason Dungjen, also a relatively new couple, and veterans Karen Courtland and Todd Reynolds.

The top three teams qualify for the Olympics next month at Lillehammer, Norway.

Sand won the 1991 American championship with Natasha Kuchiki, who now skates with Rocky Marval and stood fourth heading into Saturday's free skate. Sand-Kuchiki finished sixth at the

1982 Olympics.

Meno was fifth at the Albertville games, skating with Scott Wendland.

Davis, Boitano qualify

Defending champion Scott Davis put on a brilliant performance at the U.S. National Figure Skating Championships to beat Brian Boitano and earn a place on the U.S. Olympic team.

Two-time Olympian Boitano, 30, who spent the last five years as a touring professional, was less than stellar but still good enough to claim the second spot on the U.S. team on the winner games in Lillehammer.

"I am just thrilled to retain my title and to be going to the Olympics," Davis said. "Brian was the one I looked up to when I was growing up and now I'm going to the Olympics with him."

The men's competition was overshadowed, however, by the shocking attacks on Kerrigan.

Two women, three pair teams, and one ice dancing couple will be decided by Saturday night.

After months of buildup for Boitano, his championships prospects came down to the triple axel. Davis hit two clearly and Boitano singled his second, to play it safe.

"I have to land my stupid triple axel before the Olympics," said Boitano, who admitted he just wanted to qualify for Lillehammer.

Boitano, who will return to the Winter Games after a six year absence, is the first American male skater to make three Olympic teams since Nathaniel

Later in 1928.

## 3,000 fans watch Beckenbauer's 1st Bayern training

MUNICH, Germany (R) — Some 3,000 fans turned out to watch Germany's former national team coach Franz Beckenbauer take charge of his first training session at Bayern Munich Friday.

Daily training sessions at Bayern's Saebenerstrasse Complex regularly attract a few hundred fans but Friday's attendance was a record.

The crowd, which included a large contingent of children, watched the team do warm-up exercises and applauded goals during a practice match played in pleasant conditions for a January winter's day.

Beckenbauer, who has taken over from Erich Ribbeck until the end of the season, gave no long sermons to the team who made a disappointing exit from the UEFA Cup this season after defeat by English Premier League Norwich City.

"The speech was short. We were used to longer ones," midfielder Mehmet Scholl said.

Germany captain Lothar Matthaeus missed the session amid rumours that he could marry his long-time girlfriend Lolita Morena in the Swiss ski resort of Grans-Montana Saturday.

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## GOREN BRIDGE

WITH OMAR SHARIF & TAMAR HIRSCH  
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### THE VANISHING TRICK

Both vulnerable. North deals.

NORTH  
♠ 7  
♥ 62  
♦ AKQ973  
♣ A858

WEST  
♠ 43  
♥ AKQJ84  
♦ 104  
♣ K102

EAST  
♠ 8652  
♥ 98  
♦ J862  
♣ J76

SOUTH  
♠ AKQJ109  
♥ 1073  
♦ 6  
♣ 994

The bidding:  
North East South West  
1♣ Pass 1♦ 2♥  
3♠ Pass 4♠ Pass  
Pass Pass

Opening lead: King of ♣

Count South's tricks. There are 10 of them—six spades, three diamonds and the ace of clubs. It seems impossible for any of them to vanish, yet that's exactly what happened in a rubber bridge game.

No one can quibble with the auction, especially since South held 150 honors as a cushion. And given that

there are 10 tricks there for the taking, four spades must be the perfect contract.

West attacked with three rounds of hearts. Declarer ruffed the third in dummy, but East overruffed and found the excellent shift to a club. Declarer's queen was covered by the king and dummy's ace won, but declarer's predicament dawned. There was no way back to the closed hand to draw trumps, so declarer had to try to cash three diamonds for two club discards. Unfortunately, East ruffed the third diamond, so declarer wound up with just nine tricks. How did the 10th trick slip away?

When declarer innocently ruffed the third heart in dummy, communications between the hands were shattered. All South needed to do to get home was to refuse to ruff. If the opponent continues with hearts, declarer ruffs in hand and there are no further problems.



NEWS IN BRIEF

U.N. protests to Israel over shooting

TYRE (AFP) — Israeli-backed militiamen opened fire at two tanks manned by Finnish peacekeepers in South Lebanon without causing casualties, a U.N. officer here said Friday. He told AFP that the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL) protested to Israel over Thursday's incident, which he said involved militiamen of the Israeli-trained and financed South Lebanon Army (SLA). The tanks were crossing the Hamra bridge, in the western sector of Israel's "security zone," on their way to UNIFIL in Nagura, south of Tyre, when gunshots were fired in their direction, the officer said. Israel told UNIFIL that the SLA forces were aiming at three unidentified commandos in the region, he said.

Polish ex-CIA agent in Israel arrested

WARSAW (AFP) — A Polish ex-Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) agent in Israel and friend of former Prime Minister Menachem Begin was arrested here Thursday and charged with armed robbery and illegal arms possession, judicial officials said Friday. Andrzej Kielcynski, believed to be the head of a criminal gang, carried out a number of armed robberies throughout Poland with his nephew Albert Kielcynski after his return from Israel in April 1992, according to the newspaper express Wiczyzny. Mr. Kielcynski left Poland for Israel in 1958, where he became a friend and close associate of the country's future Prime Minister Menachem Begin. In the 1970s, he reportedly participated in a number of attacks in Israel, notably against the German embassy, the Goethe Institute and the Luftwaffe airbase headquarters in Tel Aviv. Kielcynski, who had links to leading Israeli politicians, was then recruited by the CIA, to whom he provided information on government policy and the location of nuclear weapons sites in the 1980s, the newspaper reported.

Cholesterol testing said unreliable

LONDON (AFP) — Cholesterol levels are not sufficiently reliable in predicting heart disease, according to research published here Friday. The 12-year study of 21,500 men, 220 of whom died of heart disease during the research period, showed up to three-quarters of heart deaths would not be predicted by cholesterol screening alone. Only 20 per cent of those who died during the study were in the group that tested among the 10 per cent highest cholesterol group, the study showed.

Briton who kidnapped son jailed

LONDON (AFP) — Peter Malkin, the British businessman who kidnapped his 12-year-old son in France and took refuge with him in Egypt for two months was sentenced to 18 months in prison by the high court here Friday. Mr. Malkin, 54, was arrested Thursday as he stepped off a plane at Heathrow airport, accompanied by his son Oliver and his friend, Audrey Donnelly. Oliver was immediately taken away from Mr. Malkin and returned by plane to France, where he was reunited with his mother, Eliza Fridmore, 36, who has legal custody of the child.

Mass funeral for 850 Iranian soldiers

TEHRAN (AFP) — President Ali Akbar Hashemi Rafsanjani attended a mass funeral Friday for 850 Iranian soldiers killed in the 1980-1988 war with Iraq and whose remains were found recently, officials said. Each of the coffins was draped with an Iranian flag at the ceremony which followed Friday prayers at Tehran University, officials said. The soldiers' remains were found by volunteers and members of a committee in charge of conducting a search for missing-in-action.

U.S. commandos in Pakistan

ISLAMABAD (AFP) — A contingent of 150 U.S. army commandos has arrived here to participate in joint military exercises with their elite Pakistani troop counterparts, officials said here Friday. The U.S. Special Forces troops and the Special Services group of the Pakistani army will take part in war games in the mountainous regions of North West Frontier Province, they said.

Nigerian ruler relocates to inland

ABUJA (R) — Military ruler General Sani Abacha, who seized power in November moved his government to Nigeria's inland capital Abuja Friday, an official spokesman said. Mr. Abacha and senior members of his government arrived around noon in Abuja where all government business would now be conducted, he said. Mr. Abacha had been operating from Lagos since Nov. 17, when he became head of state following the sudden resignation of former interim civilian leader Ernest Shonekan.

UAE bans meat for containing pork

ABU DHABI (AFP) — The United Arab Emirates (UAE) has banned Dutch Zwan canned beef after tests showed it contained pork, which is prohibited by Islam, a municipal official told Friday's newspapers here. Existing stocks of the Zwan products, among the most popular meat products in the Gulf, have been withdrawn and destroyed, said Abdul Latif Fadil, director of Sharjah Municipality. The problem was discovered last month when health inspectors in Ajman found Zwan cans carrying the words "slaughtered according to Islamic Law" on one side and "pork" on the other. "Tests have shown all Zwan products were laced with pork. A decision has been taken to withdraw all stocks from the UAE and destroy them," he said.

Bombs found outside New York building

NEW YORK (AP) — Whoever left homemade bombs outside two New York buildings along with notes criticising the Israeli government may have intended to scare people but not actually cause damage, Police Commissioner Raymond Kelly says. The fact that the bombs were set in the predawn hours Wednesday when the office buildings were empty, and that the devices were not powerful or well-designed, suggests "they may have been left just as a message," Mr. Kelly said. A group that is based in one of the buildings, Americans for Peace Now, issued a statement condemning the abortive bombings and promising to redouble its efforts for peace. The bombs, both crude devices made of thermos bottles and egg timers, were safely disposed of by the police bomb squad. But no one claimed responsibility, and those who set them remained a mystery.

Blizzards, storms lash Western Europe

LONDON (R) — Blizzards, high winds and torrential rain lashed Western Europe Thursday and Friday, disrupting travel and forcing dozens of people to flee their homes. One man died in London after driving his car into a canal in an overnight snowstorm while in the southern French Alps over 100 people were evacuated as relentless rain caused flooding. In Portugal, high winds whipped the Atlantic into waves of up to five metres, closing many ports and forcing the crew of an Italian gas carrier to abandon ship in the Straits of Gibraltar. All 17 crew were rescued but officials said the ship, which was abandoned when water flooded into the engine room, may well have sunk. Snow fell as far south as Andalusia in Spain and the Algarve in Portugal, avalanches closed roads in the Italian Alps and there were warnings of snowslides in the Pyrenees in northeast Spain. In southern and central England rescue workers evacuated dozens of people from water-logged homes after weeks of almost continuous rain.

Woerner warns Russia cooperation is not one-sided

BRUSSELS (Agencies) — North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO) Secretary-General Manfred Woerner warned Russia on Friday that cooperation with the alliance depended on Moscow's full respect for human rights and the sovereignty of neighbouring states. "Cooperation is a two-way street," Mr. Woerner told a group of journalists ahead of next week's NATO summit expected to define the alliance's relations with its former Soviet bloc foes. Mr. Woerner reiterated that NATO, which has agreed to bolster military ties with Russia, was trying to support the democratic and reform efforts of President Boris Yeltsin. "He knows that, of course, cooperation with the West requires full respect for not only human rights domestically but also the sovereignty and independence of neighbouring states," the NATO chief said. Concern about Russia's direction has heightened since the surprisingly strong showing by ultra-nationalists in last month's parliamentary elections. But NATO analysts said there were worrying signs even before. They cited Moscow's insistence on protecting Russian-speaking minorities abroad, its slowness in withdrawing troops from the Baltic states and its drive to become the main peacekeeper in the former Soviet republics. Mr. Woerner said that while NATO wanted to cooperate with Moscow, its policy "to a certain extent is influenced by what happens in Russia, by the substance and also by the language of those who are responsible for policymaking."

The summit is expected to adopt a U.S. proposal that would offer limited military cooperation with NATO's former cold war enemies but not the automatic promise of alliance membership. Russia is strongly opposed to its one-time satellites joining NATO. Mr. Woerner reiterated that while Moscow would have no veto over the alliance's decisions its interests would have to be considered. "We have to satisfy the security needs of the countries of Central and Eastern Europe and we have to build a Euro-Atlantic community which does not exclude, but includes Russia," he said. "This can be done in a carefully measured evolution over time." Defence chiefs of four East European countries Friday welcomed the NATO plan to offer them closer military links, but called for assurances that it was a step towards membership of the alliance. The defence ministers of Poland, Slovakia and Hungary, and the Czech Republic's deputy defence minister, also asked for NATO to state clearly that they can one day become members. "The participants in the meeting attentively discussed (NATO's) 'Partnership for Peace' initiative," they said in a statement after talks on coordinating a joint strategy before the NATO summit in Brussels. "They believe it is a step in the right direction, favourable to the idea of multilateral security and leads to a broadening of cooperation between NATO and the states of central Eastern Europe," they said. Two senior East European

politicians on Friday urged speedy full NATO membership for former communist countries, implicitly expressing concern over the U.S. partnership for Peace Initiative. The comments came after a meeting with Washington's U.N. Ambassador Madeleine Albright and Chairman of the U.S. Joint Chiefs of Staff General John Shalikashvili. Polish President Lech Walesa told the two U.S. envoys here that the United States should leap rather than crawl in its Eastern European policy. "As a soldier, I know that one advances more quickly by leaping. Certainly, one can also crawl, and sometimes it is necessary. But today in Europe there is an opportunity to leap, crawling would be slower and less efficient."

Rabbani foes accept temporary ceasefire

KABUL (Agencies) — Afghanistan's combined opposition forces Friday announced a temporary ceasefire to permit the evacuation of wounded and diplomats from Kabul, but said they still sought the unconditional resignation of President Burhanuddin Rabbani. In a joint communique issued from Prime Minister Gulbuddin Hekmatyar's base in Charasiab, on the eastern outskirts of Kabul, they said Mr. Rabbani should step down and publicly announce his resignation through the media. The communique was issued by the supreme coordination council (SCC), which groups former communist leader Abdul Rashid Dostum's National Movement, Mr. Hekmatyar's Hezb-e-Islami, former President Sibghatullah Mojaddedi's National Liberation Front of Afghanistan and the Shi'ite Hezb-e-Wahdat. It said the parties "are ready for cessation of hostilities." The statement released by Mr. Hekmatyar's representative Mengal Hussain in Islamabad late Friday said the SCC agreed to allow the evacuation of people wounded in the bloody six-day fight for Kabul. It will also enable foreign diplomats to leave Kabul if they wish and help resettle war-displaced Afghans from the capital to safer places, it said. The ceasefire proposal, urged by Pakistan, had also been accepted to supply hospitals in Kabul with medicine and arrange essential food items for the needy residents. The communique held Mr. Rabbani responsible for the latest "killings, destruction and uprooting of the innocent people in Kabul." Mr. Hussein said that without Mr. Rabbani's removal, peace would not return to Afghanistan. Meanwhile thousands fled the Afghan capital Friday taking advantage of the return of calm. Heavy rain and fog over the city may also have contributed to a grounding of aircraft and the silencing of rival artillery fire. More than 3,000 people have been treated at hospitals since the urban warfare erupted Jan. 1, and many more victims are believed trapped inside their homes. Hundreds are feared dead. There was only sporadic fighting Friday, and thousands of residents used the lull to escape frontline neighbourhoods for safer parts of Kabul or flee the city altogether. The government said all the main factions agreed to the truce, which was to begin at 6 a.m. (0100 GMT) Saturday. The remaining United Nations officials and foreign diplomats in Kabul will be evacuated to Pakistan in a convoy Saturday morning if the ceasefire is honoured. However, the truce is expected to be only temporary. Countless ceasefires have collapsed since the feuding groups ousted a communist government in 1992 and then began fighting each other for control of the capital. Neither Mr. Rabbani's party nor his main rivals have shown much interest in a permanent ceasefire.

Iran can withstand U.S. pressure — Rafsanjani

TEHRAN (AFP) — President Ali Akbar Hashemi Rafsanjani accused the United States on Friday of seeking to destroy Iranian revolution, but warned that the Islamic republic was no longer vulnerable and could even survive a blockade. Speaking at the weekly prayer, Mr. Rafsanjani said Iran had been singled out by the "most satanic power in the world" for its role in Islamic awakening throughout the world. "An orchestrated propaganda campaign is underway to discourage Iranian people by exaggerating our economic difficulties," he said. But the "great arrogance" should realise it is too late and we have passed the stage of vulnerability, he said. "Their weapon of oil is no longer effective against us and the recent price shocks have only hurt their (Washington's) friends," the president said apparently referring to pro-Western oil-rich Arab states. He said Iran had reached self-sufficiency in food production and could survive "even if it was forced to stop exporting oil." Mr. Rafsanjani said Iran was "no longer dependent" on oil income and that more revenues would only help it to speed up the reconstruction programmes. Oil prices have dipped to their lowest levels in five years, with Iran selling a barrel of crude for less than \$11, according to Western energy experts. Iran which earns 80 per cent of its hard currency through oil exports, has repeatedly accused Western countries, notably the United States of plotting to lower prices. A central bank official said last week that Iran had lost from \$5 to \$6 billion in hard currency since March 1993 because of the weak oil market. Despite efforts to reduce dependency on oil, crude exports are expected to cover 67 per cent of Iran's 1994-1995 state budget, according to official figures. Ties with South Africa Foreign Minister Ali Akbar Velayati said on Friday that Iran gave priority to economic relations with South Africa over full diplomatic ties, Tehran Radio said. Mr. Velayati also told the radio that Iran favoured political ties with anti-apartheid groups, suggesting that diplomatic normalisation with Pretoria would be gradual. The Iranian cabinet voted on Wednesday for the reestablishment of diplomatic ties between the two countries because of the "end of Pretoria's racist policies against blacks." It also ordered the Foreign Ministry to pave the way for lifting of economic sanctions, which were imposed shortly after the 1979 Islamic revolution which toppled the Shah, a close ally of South Africa. The decision to restore diplomatic relations with South Africa ends a split dating back to the revolution and comes amid mounting economic difficulties in Iran and strained relations with several Western countries. Mr. Velayati has said the African National Congress and other groups asked Iran to remove economic sanctions against Pretoria. Before the revolution, Iran was the main supplier of oil to South Africa and, according to political observers in Tehran, Iran could be seeking to regain a share of the oil market there.



CLASH OVER PEACE: Israeli policemen stop an activist from the Bloc of Peace from clashing with a Jewish settler during a demonstration held in Jerusalem on Friday against the settlements in the Israeli-occupied territories (AFP photo)

Yemen seeks release of kidnapped oilmen amid recriminations

SANAA (Agencies) — The Yemeni authorities Friday asked tribal leaders to use their influence to win the release of four Yemenis, a Canadian and a Briton working for the U.S. Hunt Oil firm, political sources here said. A group from the Khawlan tribe kidnapped the six Tuesday in the Maareb region 100 kilometres east of here and are demanding the release of one of their own men in exchange, Hunt engineers said. Earlier reports said the kidnappers were from the Daham tribe. Political sources here said the government was in contact with several tribal leaders in a bid to persuade the kidnappers to free the six, a helicopter pilot and five engineers. They were kidnapped after flying to the Maareb area to inspect a leak at a pumping station, Hunt engineers said, adding that the helicopter was also seized. The Yemeni Socialist Party (YSP) Al Thawri newspaper reported that the oil workers were trying to defuse a bomb planted by the Khawlan on one of the company's pipelines. Hunt Oil did not confirm that report. Company engineers told AFP that the kidnappers wanted the authorities to free a tribesman who has been held for several weeks by Yemeni authorities in exchange for the six. Daham tribesmen kidnapped an American diplomat, Haynes Mahoney, in November and held him for a week. It also held two American engineers from Hunt Oil for five days last May. The Daham and Khawlan are part of the Bakil tribal group, which is generally loyal to Yemeni President Ali Abdullah Saleh. But the Khawlan are known to support Vice-President Ali Salem Al-Bedhi's YSP. The two leaders, the first from the north and the second from the south, have been split since August over how to run the affairs of Yemen, united in May 1990 after three hundred years of separation. Several other foreigners have been abducted in recent months by tribes trying to exert pressure on the government, which is struggling to cope with serious economic and political problems. Maareb, where the six men are believed to be held, is a mountainous region with some peaks as high as 2,000 metres. It is controlled by the heavily armed Bakil, who have for long encroachment on the central government's authority.

HCFS fund environmentally

WASHINGTON (R) — Scientists have pronounced hydrofluorocarbons (HCFS) — which act as refrigeration coolants as environmentally sound, quelling fears they might be harmful as the Chlorofluorocarbons (CFCs) they replace. "We've confirmed scientifically that HCFS are ozone friendly," A.R. Ravishankar, a scientist with the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, told Reuters in a telephone interview. Dr. Ravishankar and his colleagues report on their findings in Friday's issue of the journal Science. Last year a group of scientists at Oxford University in England and University College in Dublin speculated that some HCFS actually might cause more harm to the ozone than CFCs. Their concerns focused on HCFS that contained an unusually stable combination of fluorine and carbon which, they said, might produce ozone-depleting agents when exposed to air. Ozone, a molecule consisting of three oxygen atoms, is diffused throughout the upper reaches of Earth's atmosphere and blocks much of the harmful ultraviolet light radiating from the sun by absorbing it. HCFS already are widely used as a replacement for CFCs, which have been demonstrated to significantly reduce the ozone layer and which are scheduled to be phased out worldwide by 1996 according to an international agreement.

GM models most popular with thieves

DETROIT (AP) — Last year's hottest car was a Porsche, Mercedes? Lexus? Toyota Camry? Ford? Taurus? Believe it or not, the most stolen car of 1993 in the United States was an antiquated Oldsmobile. The 1984 Cutlass Supreme, placed No. 1. General Motors Corp. products filled every top 10 list in the list released by a company that does vehicle valuations for the insurance industry. While there always will be joy riders, it's not the wild stripes that make a model popular with thieves. "The single most overriding factor is the interchangeability factor as far as the parts go," said William Geen, senior vice president of CCC Information Services Inc. of Chicago, which released the list. "The car parts business remains the big business." The Cutlass — the 1984-87 models — occupied four of the top five spots. "If you look at the model-year span, there was nothing done to radically change the vehicle," Mr. Geen said. The value of those parts becomes much higher in that you can use them for a lot of similar type vehicles. GM spokesman Jerry Bishop said no one was immediately available to comment. CCC based its numbers on the vehicle valuations it does. Mr. Geen said no accurate way exists to gauge how many cars are stolen each year in the United States because so many are uninsured or never reported stolen. Estimates by different agencies go as high as 1.5 million, he said, but aggressive efforts by carmakers, police, consumers and insurers to stem car theft have shown progress this decade. "It's still a big problem, but it's getting a little bit of a dent in it," he said. The '84 Cutlass led the list for the second consecutive year. The Chevrolet Camaro held the distinction for the five previous years. Following the 1984 Cutlass on the list were 1986 Camaro, 1986 Cutlass, 1987 Cutlass, 1985 Cutlass, 1987 Camaro, 1984 Buick Regal, 1987 Chevrolet Caprice, 1991 Chevrolet T104 Blazer, and 1985 Buick Regal.

Wall torn down to remove nearly half-ton body

BRISBANE (R) — Emergency workers had to tear down part of a wall to remove the nearly half-ton body of an Australian man who died in his home, a State Emergency Service worker said Friday. Thirteen police, ambulances and fire officers and State Emergency Service (SES) volunteer workers were needed to carry the body of Kenneth Lacer from his home at Crows Nest in south-east Queensland on Jan. 1. "He was a big lad. There was a much strain placed on his heart," Les King, one of the workers who helped load the body onto a truck, said.

Swiss reject French explanation

ZURICH (R) — Switzerland's justice minister on Friday described as "wholly inadequate" France's explanation for its decision last week to send home two Iranian murder suspects wanted in Switzerland. French Foreign Minister Alain Juppe earlier denied in a radio interview that France had given in to pressure over the affair, saying his government's determination to keep France from being a base of "international terrorism" was beyond doubt. The only explanation that we have received, that the decision was in the 'national interests', is wholly inadequate," Swiss Justice Minister Arnold Koller told the Lausanne newspaper Le Nouveau Quotidien in an interview. Mr. Koller described the French decision as regrettable and said the Swiss government continued to study the consequences. "My concern is that this should not lead other states to follow France's exchange," Mr. Koller said. "This case must remain the exception, or the fight against terrorism will be compromised." The two Iranians, arrested at Bern's request in Paris in 1992, were wanted by Switzerland for the 1990 murder in Geneva of Iranian dissident Kazem Rajavi, brother of Masoud Rajavi who heads Iran's Mujahadeen-e-Khalq guerrilla movement, based in Iraq. Switzerland lodged a formal protest with France over its refusal to extradite the two men, saying the French decision to send them home broke the European extradition accord. Mr. Juppe refused on French radio to explain why Prime Minister Edouard Balladur discounted Switzerland's extradition request and released Mohsen Sharif-Esfahani and Ahmad Taheri from prison. "We did not bow to anyone," Mr. Juppe said in the interview. "We have shown this several times, with the PKK and FIS, and it demands a lot of courage and determination," he said, adding: "Fighting terrorism does not mean keeping on our territory those who organise terrorism." France has banned Kurdish